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ENGLAND AND AMERICA

1763 TO 1783

"Wars at their commencement have generally been popular with the good people of England. That with America formed no exception to the general rule. The counties sent forth what were called their 'life and property' addresses. The great body of the people were pleased at the prospect of transferring a portion of their burdens on to other shoulders. The country gentlemen were deluded by the ministerial assurance that American taxation would relieve them of a part of the land-tax. 'The merchants,' wrote Burke, in 1775, 'begin to snuff the cadaverous *haut goût* of lucrative war; the fighting business never was so lively, on account of the prodigious taking up, for transport service; great orders for provisions of all kinds, new clothing for the troops, puts life into the woollen manufactures.'" —LORD ALBEMARLE, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham*, ii. 276, 277.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA

1763 TO 1783

THE HISTORY OF A REACTION

BY

MARY A. M. MARKS

AUTHOR OF "A GREAT TREASON" "MASTERS OF THE WORLD" ETC. ETC.

"The submission of a free people to the executive authority of government is no more than a compliance with laws which they themselves have enacted."—JUNIUS.

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VOL. II.

(1779 TO 1783)

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ENGLAND AND AMERICA

CHAPTER LXXV

KEPPEL AND PALLISER

"Thank God, I am not the accuser, but the accused!"—ADMIRAL KEPPEL, Dec. 11, 1778.

"To-night, I hear, Sir Hugh is to be burnt in effigy before your door."—*Sir Joshua Reynolds to Admiral Keppel*, Dec. 12, 1778.

"Lord Sandwich, exceedingly terrified, escaped through the garden with his mistress Miss Reay, to the Horse Guards, and there betrayed a most manifest panic."—Walpole, *Last Journals*. "It is pleasant to see those who condemned the towns of America to fire and sword, terrified with crackers."—*Walpole to Lady Ossory*, Feb. 17, 1779.

"LORD NORTH,—The very sluggish attendance after Easter the last session . . . has very much filled my mind on the near approach of the next; and the conviction that it is much easier to prevent evils than to redress them as they arise makes it highly proper for me to put before your eyes the necessity of some plan being adopted to effect an early and constant attendance during the next session. Your zeal for the service will make you, I am certain . . . chalk out some mode for this purpose, which . . . will also . . . not put you under the dilemma I have often seen, of doubting of critical occasions whether a sufficient attendance will be found. You may depend on my warmest support in this business, and that my disapprobation shall be shewn in the fullest manner to those who swerve from this duty. . . ."—*The King to Lord North*, Kew, Oct. 25, 1778.

"Certainly I cannot stoop to send for the Admiral [Keppel]. . . . If Lord Howe would have come cordially into the Admiralty, it might have been a popular appointment: but as he has added conditions that it would be disgraceful to grant, I am clear Lord Sandwich fills the Admiralty much better than any other man in the kingdom would. . . . Get from Keppel when he would be able to head the fleet, which will oblige him to speak out."—*The Same to the Same*, March 1, 1779.

As soon as we had quarrelled with our next-door neighbours, Ministers were compelled to go to Opposition for an Admiral.

Even they recognised that it was essential to appoint a popular admiral.

Keppel, after an interview with the King, accepted the command of the Fleet of Observation, on March 16, 1778. He was given to believe that he would find a strong and well-equipped fleet ready for sea. In December, 1777, Sandwich had stated in the House of Lords that thirty-five ships were ready, and seven more would be ready in a few days. Next March Keppel found not more than six "in any condition to go upon service; and of them, all I shall say is, that on reviewing them with a seaman's eye, they gave me no pleasure." He returned to town, "without making any noise," and "represented amicably this state of things." He was told the ships were collecting—"and I must say that from that time forward, great diligence was used." But by that time the French Treaty was known, and our Ambassador was recalled.

On the 13th of June Keppel sailed from St. Helen's with twenty ships of the line—"well enough equipped, neither the best nor the worst I had seen." Twenty-five miles off the Lizard, he sighted two French ships, apparently reconnoitring. He was in doubt, and some of his officers seem to have doubted too. "War had not been declared, nor even reprisals ordered.[1] I might be disavowed, and a war with France be laid to the account of my rashness." He undertook the affair at his own risk. The *Licorne* struck after a shot or two. The other ship was "the famed *Belle Poule*." Chased by the *Arethusa*, she turned to bay, and one of the most famous single combats in naval warfare followed.[2] The *Arethusa* was so shattered that she could not enter the small bay where the *Belle Poule* had taken refuge, and in the night boats came and towed the Frenchman off. The same day Keppel took another frigate, the *Pallas*. He found his captures more important than he had expected—the papers taken in the ships told him that whereas he had been assured there were but seventeen sail of the line in Brest Harbour, there were thirty-two waiting for him! "And frigates more than treble my number." He knew what could be done by English officers and seamen, "but I have never had the folly to despise my enemy." The destruction of his fleet would hazard the very being of the kingdom—the French would become masters of the sea, for that campaign at least. "I was filled with the deepest

[1] It does not appear that war was ever formally declared with France.

[2] "On deck five hundred men did dance,
The stoutest they could find in France;
We with two hundred did advance,
On board of the Arethusa."

melancholy I ever felt in my life. I found myself obliged to turn my back on France. I again risqued myself on my own opinion. My firm persuasion is, that the country was saved by it."[1]

Ministers dared not reprove him, when he returned for reinforcements on June 27.[2] On July 9, he set sail again, having now twenty-four ships of the line, four frigates, and two fireships. Most of the ships were well appointed. The French left Brest the day before Keppel left Portsmouth. The fleets sighted each other off Ushant on the 23rd of July.

D'Orvilliers was at first ready to fight, but finding the British too strong, manœuvred to avoid an action. Night came on, the wind freshened, the French were bearing away. Keppel gave the signal to chase. This went on for four days. At dawn of the 27th the fleets were three miles apart, the French still pressing to windward, and the English following them up. During the morning some changes of wind, and rapid evolutions, brought them nearer each other, until d'Orvilliers saw that an action of some kind must be fought. Anxious to make it indecisive, he changed his course, and stood off on the opposite tack. This brought on a desultory but fierce action—the fleets, sailing to contrary points of the compass, fired on each other as they passed. Both sides suffered much. At 3 p.m. all were out of action. Keppel in the centre, and Sir Robert Harland in the van, made every effort to renew, but when the smoke cleared it was seen that the rear division was still on the contrary tack, far out of the line which Keppel had signalled to form. Some of the ships were even in danger of being cut off if Keppel had not made a rapid diagonal movement. The sun was fast sinking—a message was sent to Palliser, but he still did not come into line. An explosion had occurred on his ship (the *Formidable*), but it did not seem sufficient to account for his conduct. The night was unusually dark, and at dawn the French topmasts were seen in the far distance.

The indecisive result of the action was a disappointment to the country, but at the time no one seems to have thought it inglorious. The French, however, were ready for sea again a week before we were; and the next time d'Orvilliers, expecting to have a Spanish armament with him next year, would not risk another action.

As soon as the fleet returned to refit, there were whispers that the Admiral's despatch had not told all. But Keppel's great object was to get to sea again as soon as possible; on the 23rd of

[1] Speech in the House.

[2] His secret orders were to return, *if inferior*.

August he sailed once more; and perhaps the secret might have been kept if the ministerial papers had not begun to cry up the Vice-Admiral of the Blue as the man who did whatever was done on the 27th of July. Sir Hugh Palliser was always till now considered a good officer, and an honourable man. He was a favourite of Administration, especially of Sandwich, and had a seat at the Board of Admiralty, but he had always been on good terms with Keppel.

Keppel was the most popular Admiral in England—"Little Keppel," as the Navy called him affectionately. Barré had said in the House that if "Black Dick" and "Little Keppel" commanded jointly or severally, there would be no need for a pressgang.[1] Keppel had declined to serve against America, but had personally assured the King of his readiness in any other direction; and, strange to say, the King does not seem to have cherished any rancour against him for his refusal. Not so Sandwich; it was, moreover, to the interest of the Ministry to show that the incompetence of a Whig Admiral, and not their own, had prevented the 27th of July from being a decisive victory.

Keppel searched in vain for d'Orvilliers till October, when he returned for the winter—to find that all was known.

The panegyrics on Palliser had provoked a startling rejoinder. Someone wrote to say that "Sir H. P——'s conduct saved the *French* fleet—for four hours he lay with his fore-topsail unbent," and the Admiral at last absolutely sent a frigate[2] to tell him he only waited for him to renew the attack![3] On the 5th of October—only a few days before Keppel's last return from sea—another letter appeared in the *Morning Intelligencer*, with fuller details, roundly asserting that Admiral Keppel could not renew the action because the Vice-Admiral of the Blue would not obey his signals.

The statement about the sending of a frigate to hurry up the Vice-Admiral was a revelation. Thinking the public service would suffer if such disobedience on the part of a high officer were published to the world, Keppel had suppressed all mention of it, and had even given Palliser praise for his exertions at the beginning of the action. The horrid accusation was now whispered

[1] Keppel was cheerful of countenance; Howe was dark and melancholy. Long after this, in the next French war, one of his seamen once said: "I think we shall have a brush with the enemy this morning, for Black Dick was seen to smile."

[2] The *Fox*.

[3] Captain Walsingham, of the *Thunderer*, said in the House that he was convinced this letter was written by a lieutenant on board the Vice-Admiral's own ship.

that Sir Hugh Palliser, a creature of Sandwich, had purposely disobeyed Keppel's signal, to prevent a Whig Admiral from covering himself with glory—for no one ever dreamed that Palliser was a coward.

Palliser now wrote to Keppel, demanding a contradiction of the statement, and enclosing a paper, which the Admiral was to sign as his own, stating that he never intended to renew the action that day, and that his signal was only an order to be ready next morning. Keppel did not reply. Then Palliser called on him. There was a very angry scene, Keppel refusing to sign anything, and Palliser threatening to justify himself by accusing the Admiral of misconduct. Finding he could not move Keppel, Palliser went off to the office of the *Morning Post*, then edited by a creature of Lord Sandwich,[1] and gave his own version, which he signed with his name, charging Keppel with not having made the necessary preparations for action; with not putting his fleet into a line of battle, but allowing it to be dispersed and disordered; and finally with allowing the French fleet to escape in the night. Soon after he lodged these charges at the Admiralty, on which a warrant was issued for a court-martial on Keppel. Palliser had thus waited five months before bringing his charges.

On the 11th of December Temple Luttrell moved for a court-martial to enquire into the Conduct of Sir Hugh Palliser on the 27th of July last. Both Keppel and Palliser were in their places. Palliser said he had been most injuriously treated by "some dark, concealed assassin," in a newspaper. He had waited on his Admiral—the only person who could assist him, and this proving fruitless, he had resorted to the only means in his power—he had appealed to the public. He then attacked Keppel for "substantially" charging him with disobedience, and laying the want of success on the 27th at his door. Then, throwing off all disguise, he deliberately accused Keppel of trying to load him "with the odium of the miscarriage of that day, and compel him to bear the blame of his own mistakes and incapacity." What he had done, he had done in self-defence, with the utmost pain—there were few men living he had a higher veneration and esteem for than the honourable gentleman; he had known him for many years, and

[1] The Rev. Henry Bate, Editor of the *Post*, was one of the hireling scribes who defended Administration. The year before he had fought a duel. The Duke of Richmond stated in the House of Lords that some members of Administration, and one in particular (believed to be Sandwich), had tried to get him one of the best livings in the Chancellor's gift. The Chancellor did not deny it, but one menber of Administration spoke of Bate as a "miscreant."

looked upon his friendship as one of the happiest circumstances of his life.

Nugent blamed Palliser for noticing an anonymous publication in the way he did. An enquiry would call the great naval officers from their duty, and sow dissension among all ranks of seamen, "from the admiral to the foremast-man." Suppose every fine woman who is calumniated in the public prints by one of her own sex, were to demand an enquiry? Where would it end? Captain Walsingham said he never saw more cordiality than among all the officers on their return to Plymouth after the affair of the 27th. "The admirals seemed to live extremely happy together." Lord Shuldam corroborated this testimony, and "solemnly affirmed" that not "the most distant insinuation transpired to the prejudice of either of the commanders." North and others said there was no evidence before the House to support the motion.

At length Keppel rose. He thanked his friends for their "partiality" to him, but he had been publicly accused. Specific charges had been lodged against him at the Admiralty Board, and he had received notice to prepare for a court-martial. He should meet the enquiry with calmness and inward satisfaction. As for accusing the Vice-Admiral, the only fault he knew him to be guilty of was writing a letter in the morning paper. He could not think of voting—he should quit the House. He then walked out. Every sentence he had uttered had been punctuated by applause.

After he had gone, Admiral Pigot pronounced his panegyric. He had known Keppel for forty of his forty-four years of service, and never knew a single action that did not deserve the approbation of every good and honest man. He had not known the Vice-Admiral so long, but always esteemed him a worthy man and a good officer. In his letter to the paper he had accused himself—he acknowledged that he did not obey the signal, and so admitted a fact which the Admiral could not explain away if he wished. What could Admiral Keppel do? He could not contradict the Vice-Admiral's own words! Nor could he venture to sea with a person who had signed with his name a censure on his conduct as a commander. On the other hand, what was the conduct of the Vice-Admiral? He witnessed the pretended neglect and misconduct of the Admiral, but he continued on a footing of friendship with him. He sailed with him a second time, and returned a second time—and all this while, not a word of complaint. At last, after almost five months, he exhibits an accusation against his principal! The

Admiralty had acted very rashly—an officer of Mr. Keppel's rank, services, and professional character, deserved another kind of treatment. Mulgrave said the Admiralty was obliged to proceed to a trial on any complaint. Pigot said such a principle would destroy all naval service, and leave every superior officer at the mercy of his inferior. And a little later Sir Richard Sutton quoted the case of Admiral Graves, who was attacked in the newspapers, and applied for a court-martial to vindicate his character, but was refused, because they could not try him without a previous accusation, and the King was perfectly satisfied with his services. This showed that the Vice-Admiral could not bring on an enquiry into his own conduct. Mawbey bluntly declared that the Admiralty Board was Lord Sandwich—"the inferior commissioners were no better than cyphers"; he was "the mouth" of the Board; and the whole thing looked like "a preconcerted plan to ruin the Admiral." On this Palliser declared, upon his honour, that he had no previous concert with Sandwich, or with any member of the Board—he acted on his own judgment, and told no one. Temple Luttrell advised Palliser to close with the motion—the same trial would do for both. If the Vice-Admiral refused, he should think his conduct was copied from what appeared in a pamphlet towards the end of the late war (and looked upon then as the work of an able lawyer[1]); in which it was observed that if the noble lord who commanded the British cavalry at Minden, instead of demanding an enquiry into his own conduct, had accused Prince Ferdinand, the disgrace and dishonour which was the consequence of that trial would have fallen on the Prince, and not on the noble lord. After this side-hit at Germaine, the debate continued to a late hour of the night, and when Dunning had exposed the folly of the argument that the Admiralty was compelled to order a court-martial on the demand of anybody or everybody, the motion was carried in an amended form, omitting the clause which mentioned disobedience to orders.

Keppel's trial lasted thirty days—during which the country thought of nothing else. As he was in delicate health, his friends[2] hurried a Bill through Parliament to enable the court-martial to be held on shore—the daily transit to and from the ship might be his death. As Ministers could have supported this calamity, they tried to delay the Bill—they did not dare actually to oppose it. The Royal Dukes of Cumberland and

[1] Wedderburn.

[2] Admiral Pigot moved it in the Commons.

Gloucester, the Dukes of Portland, Richmond, and Bolton, the Marquesses of Rockingham and Granby, the Earl of Effingham, Sir George Savile, Fox, Burke, Sheridan, and a great number of naval officers, went down to Portsmouth and remained there during the trial.

Keppel was not allowed to produce any part of his instructions, although they were of course very material to his defence, and the part referring to the case could have been made public with no ill consequences. To complete the aspect of bad faith which marks the whole story, the extraordinary fact came out that several of the logs had been tampered with. Three leaves had been cut out of the *Formidable's*, and one put in! Captain Bazely swore he did not know why. Palliser said *he* did not. At last the Master said that one was cut out because ink had been spilled on it, and the two others because of some omissions. Arnold, Master of the *Robuste*, owned that he had altered and added to the log for July 27–8, even after it was known that Admiral Keppel would be tried! Alexander Hood, captain of the *Robuste* (a chief partisan of Palliser), said he thought a log might be altered! Two leaves of the *Ramillies'* (Digby's ship) had been torn out. The Master knew nothing.[1]

As there was not one tittle of evidence against him, Keppel would have been honourably acquitted as soon as the prosecution had finished; but the Court considered it due to his forty years of service, and his ten battles at sea, to hear his defence. It was remarked that whereas "Little Keppel" generally had to read his speeches in the House, he spoke before the Court "like an inspired man."

Keppel was acquitted on the 11th of February, 1779. Common sailors shed tears of joy. The news reached London at eleven that night, and the whole town went mad. Mobs broke the windows of North, Germaine, Sandwich, Lord Mulgrave,[2] Palliser, and Captain Alexander Hood. The mob tore the iron gates of the Admiralty off their hinges. A lady asserted that she saw young

[1] Keppel said that these alterations seemed made "rather for the purpose of exculpating another person, than of criminating me. . . . There has always been, and probably will always be, something slovenly in these books; and the masters have thought they have more power over them than is proper. There is, however, a vast difference between inaccuracy and malicious design—there is a difference between the correction or supply of indifferent matters, and the cancelling of pages and putting in others—omitting, adding to, and varying, the most important things for the most important purposes."

[2] Mulgrave was a witness for the prosecution. He commanded the *Courageux* in the action of the 27th.

William Pitt smashing her windows; the Duke of Ancaster was taken up by the watch for a like exploit. The town was illuminated night after night. Palliser was burned in effigy on Tower Hill. It has been said that no human creature but Sandwich's party and Lord Shelburne had not the warmest love and admiration for Keppel, this ugly little man, who had nothing about him to impress the beholder—no fine and stately presence, like Rodney's.

Next day the City of London voted unanimously that the thanks of the Court be given to the Honourable Augustus Keppel, for his spirited conduct on the 27th of July last, and for protecting trade; and that the freedom of the City ("in a box made of heart of oak richly embellished with gold") be presented to Admiral Keppel. On the 18th the Admiral "received the Thanks of the House of Commons, and the same day attended the levee at St. James," and "was graciously received by his Majesty." He also received the Thanks of the Lords. His danger had been real. On four of the counts he must have been condemned to death.[1]

Twelve Admirals had signed a Memorial to the King—presented by the Duke of Bolton on the 30th December. It set forth that Palliser had withheld his accusation from July 27 to December 9, and then brought it in recrimination against charges he thought had been made against himself—but which in fact never were made. It complained of the conduct of the Admiralty in receiving a charge made so long after, and in such circumstances, and in giving Keppel notice the very same day that he was to be tried—after forty years of meritorious service. It was signed first by Hawke.[2] The King called it "a most extraordinary paper." Two-thirds of these Admirals had no connection with Opposition, and many were warmly attached to Administration.

The Admiralty were compelled in decency to court-martial

[1] That he stood away, and left the Vice-Admiral of the Blue engaged with the enemy, and exposed to be cut off: That he did not renew the fight when he could have done so, "after the French fleet had been beaten, their line broken, and in disorder": That instead of this, "he led the whole British fleet away from them," and gave them the opportunity to rally, and so to claim the victory, "and publish to the world that the British fleet ran away": That on the morning of the 28th, he did not even chase "three ships which fled after the rest, but led the British fleet directly away from the enemy."

[2] The others were, Moor, the Duke of Bolton, Graves, Pigot, Sir R. Harland (who commanded the Red Division on the 27th July), Lord Bristol, Young, Barton, Geary, Shuldam, Clarke-Gayton. Howe abstained from signing, because, at his own demand, his own conduct was to be enquired into.

Palliser. He was tried at Portsmouth on April 12. No precise charge was made against him—it was only an enquiry into his conduct. His defence makes his case rather worse than before —from his own account the *Formidable* was not too much disabled to bear her part. He now rested chiefly on Keppel's allowing d'Orvilliers to slip off in the night. He said correctness must not be expected from log-books. "I never knew that any great credit was given to them as evidence. Admiral Byng was told so on his trial." "Was there any truth in the logs,"[1] he owned there would be great room for argument. Of course he was acquitted, and soon after made Governor of Greenwich Hospital.

Admiral Sir Thomas Pye presided at Keppel's trial. With him sat Vice-Admirals Montague and Buckle, Rear-Admirals Arbuthnot and Roddam; Captains Milbanke, Drake, Penny, Bennet, Boteler, Moutray, Duncan, and Cransten.

Vice-Admiral Darby presided at Palliser's trial. The other members of the Court were Rear-Admiral Digby, and Captains Sir Chaloner Ogle, Richard Kempenfeldt, Joseph Peyton, William Bayne, Mark Robinson, Adam Duncan, Samuel Goodall, James Cransten (who fell sick), Robert Linzee, John Colpoys, and George Robinson Walters.

[1] This referred especially to the log of the *Victory*.

CHAPTER LXXVI

THE SESSION OF 1778–79

"I have no doubt next spring Spain will join France."—*The King to Lord North*, Windsor Castle, Oct. 13, 1778.

"Experience has thoroughly convinced me that this country gains nothing by granting her dependencys indulgences; for opening the door encourages a desire for more, which if not complied with causes discontent, and the former benefit is obliterated."[1]—*The King to Lord North*, Queen's House, Nov. 12, 1778.

"It has been a certain position with me that firmness is the characteristick of an Englishman, that consequently when a Minister will shew a resolution boldly to advance that he will meet with support . . . if on the opening of the Session, the Speech from the Throne is penned with firmness . . . and the Ministers in their speeches shew that they will never consent to the independence of America, . . . I am certain the cry will be strong in their favour."—*The King to Lord North*, Kew, Nov. 14, 1778, 1 min. pt. 1 p.m.

THE Fifth Session of the Fourteenth Parliament opened on November 26, 1778. The King's Speech said that France had violated the faith of treaties and the rights of Sovereigns, by aiding his revolted subjects in North America. The conciliatory measures had not had the desired effect—there must now be the most active exertions; the Estimates should be laid before the gentlemen of the House of Commons, and his Majesty was sure they would grant him the necessary Supplies.

In the Debate on the Address the Earl of Plymouth said any concession would be fatal—we must be ruined if America were relinquished. He lived in Worcestershire, a great manufacturing county—manufacturers had ceased to carry on their business for want of a market, mechanics were starving for want of work. He knew opulent tradesmen and manufacturers who used to employ fifty or a hundred hands each, and now did not employ above five or ten. The Earl of Coventry said his opinion as to America had never altered—it was impossible to coerce America, the attempt was hazardous—and, even if prosperous, "infinitely pernicious and impolitic." He would

[1] Refers to Ireland.

like this opinion engraved on his tombstone. He was for separating the idea of war with France from war with America. The state of this country is deplorable—our armies are moulder-ing away, or defeated and captive, or acting on the defensive. Our Navy is far from formidable. Our manufacturers are unemployed, our commerce is declining—or carried on at such a risk, and so high an insurance, as to be of small advantage. Our stocks are almost as low as they were at the end of the late war. The least adverse accident would cut the thread that suspends ruin. Private dissipation and public rapine are increasing. He talked of reform—of abolishing pensions, sinecures, "and all the engines of a corrupt government." We have lost the man who was equal to this Herculean task, who was capable of sowing the seeds of public virtue. He was the palladium of this country—he is gone, and, like the Trojans, I begin to despair. As to what we had better do—let us get rid of this American war. The best way will be by declaring America independent. "Do it fairly, do it fully, and then we shall have leisure to punish France for her perfidy, and to recover ourselves." It is madness to persevere. The Earl of Bristol and the Earl of Effingham also urged the impossibility of going on.

Then Suffolk spoke. He, too, had never changed his mind—and he had neither pension, sinecure, nor reversion. Are we to submit to France and America? The best way to obtain an honourable peace is to show that we are able and willing to pursue war with vigour. The Bishop of Peterborough hoped they would lay aside the vain hope of unconditional submission. Sandwich rose to protest that the Navy was not annihilated—it was flourishing—we had been a little slow in our preparations, that was all—we had believed other Powers when they said they were not going to war with us. The Navy is in a more respectable state than it ever was before, so soon after a declaration of war—it is nearly, if not quite, what it was in the fourth year of the last war. Lord Bristol had demanded an enquiry into the affair off Brest, and Keppel had declared he would never command a squadron again till that affair was cleared up. Sandwich said he thought an enquiry inexpedient and im-proper—the affair was equal to a victory—the enemy's ships retired to port, and our commerce was protected. An enquiry will have consequences as bad as a defeat—it will make so much ill-will.

Shelburne asked the meaning of the hints as to the way in which the war was now to be carried on. He had a right to suppose they meant "burning their towns, using the tomahawk, desolating the interior country (an allusion to Wyoming), and carrying fire and sword among the defenceless inhabitants, old men, women, children, and infants." These, he had a right to suppose, were the means which "God and Nature" had put into the hands of Ministers. If any doubt had remained on his own mind, a proclamation issued by Governor Tonyn, in East Florida, offering a reward for every scalp delivered to persons appointed to receive them, put it beyond question. The plan was diabolical, horrid, impious, and inhuman, and called most particularly for the vengeance of Almighty God! "It could not be men, but monsters, that devised it!"

In the Commons, Fox seconded the Amendment[1] to the Address, and compared our state on entering into the present war with France with what it was at the beginning of the last. "England was then at the height of her happiness, and, I may add, of her riches and commerce." It is parliamentary to consider the King's Speech as the Speech of the Minister, so I will tell the noble lord that it made a false assertion when it said the measures had not met with the success they deserved — "You have had more success than you deserved; and you ought to be happy that things are no worse — you have escaped." You sent Admiral Keppel with twenty ships to fight thirty. You suffered d'Estaing to leave Toulon; Admiral Byron was sent to America so late that it was barely possible he could succour that brave and able commander whom I am glad to see in his place (Lord Howe). You have had a better issue than you could possibly have hoped for.

Then he came to the Commissioners. They were sent out in the dark — General Clinton left Philadelphia without giving them two hours' warning. The terms they offered were equally degrading to this country and unlikely to be accepted by Congress. Of all the commanders employed by the present Ministry, where is there one who has not quarrelled with them,

[1] Moved by Thomas Townshend: "To enquire by what fatal councils, or unhappy systems of policy, this country has been reduced from that splendid situation which, in the early part of his Majesty's reign, made her the envy of all Europe, to such a dangerous state as that which has of late called forth our utmost exertions without any adequate benefit."

and left them in disgust? "There is a spirit of discord that frustrates everything." His late Majesty was not one of those princes whom History calls a hero, but this country never was at a higher pitch of glory than during the latter part of his reign, because it was governed by a Ministry supported by the confidence of the people. How will the present Ministry appear to the future historian? "How will it sear the eyeballs of the prince to see the decline of his empire dated from his accession! His private virtues will in the lapse of time be forgotten, he will be handed down as the loser of his empire."

Fox was mistaken — the political sins of George III are almost forgotten, and only his private virtues are remembered.

Wilkes ridiculed the Commissioners—to captivate the rude members of Congress, a peer was sent—"with a green ribband, gentle manners, and winning behaviour." The principles of the next (Eden) were coercion, and passive obedience to secret orders. To him was entrusted the real secret of the negotiation, and the evacuation of Philadelphia. The third, Governor Johnstone, might have done something, but the happy moment was past. And the Commissioners had gone beyond the powers allowed them by the Act of Parliament. Of their six offers, three were direct usurpations of the right of Parliament—they offered (it was artfully worded, but quite plain) to pay the debt America has incurred by taking arms against us. Then the promises about a military force, and a reciprocal deputation of agents—there is not a syllable of all this in the three Conciliation Acts; and Congress rejected the offers with scorn, as a "ministerial trap," because they knew that means would be found to evade them — perhaps even before they were presented to Parliament for ratification.

Governor Johnstone—who professed to have returned to England of his own accord—answered this attack. He made some illuminating statements. The Commissioners left England believing that the great military force in America was to co-operate with them—instead of that orders were sent to abandon Philadelphia—orders so peremptory that the Commissioners could not even get a delay of four days to enable them to receive an answer from Congress! The Commanders to whom these orders were sent felt them to be such a complete abandonment of our interest in America, that they advised the principal loyalists to make their peace with Congress, and hundreds in consequence took the Oath of Allegiance to the different States! Clinton actually meditated

abandoning New York too! This was why the Commissioners offered so much more than they had at first intended. The offer to discharge debts did not mean—as the country gentlemen imagined—that England was to pay all the cost of the war—that was never dreamed of. But whenever peace is restored, the paper currency must be restored on some certain footing. He still declared his belief that two-thirds of the American people wished to return to "their ancient connection"; nothing but "the surrounding army," and doubts of our support, prevented their breaking out in acts of hostility to Congress. The Commissioners had to restrain them, knowing that under the secret orders no assistance could be given to such efforts. As to the "embarrassing question" of General Burgoyne's army, the proceedings of Congress were totally unworthy of such a body, and were disapproved by the most zealous for independency. "But America is governed now as England was, under a mock parliament and committee of major-generals."

Johnstone boggled sadly over his denial of Reed's accusations. He was not called upon to say a word on the subject—"but I disdain disingenuity." His denials, however, went no farther than to deny that Reed had authority from himself to make the offer. "I have perfect proof in my possession that Mr. Reed never understood any message or writing of mine as liable to that construction. *While I say this, I do not mean to disavow I have had transactions where other means besides persuasion have been used. It was necessary in my situation, it can be no reproach.*"

Governor Johnstone was by this time the only man of ability who believed the reduction of America possible. His arguments —totally unworthy of his trenchant intellect—show what has been called "the inherent weakness" of a bad cause. But every now and then they throw a side-light on what he had seen in America. There never was so excellent or well-appointed an army as that left by General Howe in Philadelphia—"the picked men for the French theatre were not equal in grace and comeliness to the worst of the light infantry." Such a body of troops was never collected together—yet we have seen what little benefit the nation has derived from them. "At the moment they were confident of victory, they were ordered to retreat, and all this summer, and half the autumn, they have literally been doing nothing"—and yet incurring the same expense in the field. We are far richer now than at the beginning of the last war—it is true our finances are more embarrassed, but we are richer and can pay more taxes. The present Ministers have lost the con-

fidence of the people. If we do not mean to be firm we had better give up at once.

Here occurred a curious little episode. Wilkes had alluded to the accounts lately published of the alleged negotiations between Bute and Chatham. Price-Campbell, who seconded the Address, said that Mountstuart's letter proved his father no longer possessed any controlling power, or even any secret influence. "As to his influence being at an end, would to God, Sir, it were!" cried Wilkes. North declared that Bute had had no influence, direct or indirect, in Administration, since he came into it. Then he excused the naval and military failures. Byron was late, because we did not know where the French were going; Philadelphia was evacuated, because we wished to diminish the extent of our lines—we could not cover Pennsylvania, New York, and Rhode Island all at the same time. As for offering the Americans too much, they had not accepted anything—"the tyrannical Congress had refused all terms"—but the people were tired of this usurped government. Then the storm separated the fleets. And as for the Dutch, it is to their interest to be our friends.

Burgoyne voted for the Amendment—he wanted both a parliamentary enquiry and a court-martial. If the reply of Congress about the Convention was a breach of public faith, it was also a mark of our humiliation—they could not have acted as they did if we had not been sunk in their judgment, and that of all the world.

Barré brought up the loss of Dominica—and of our most valuable islands—and great reason to fear for some of the rest. To make up, we had captured St. Pierre and Miquelon, with some oil, blubber, salt-fish, cartouch-boxes, and 173 muskets—as stated in the *London Gazette*.

At two in the morning the House divided, when the numbers were, for the Amendment 107, against 226. The Address was then agreed to.

Next day (November 27) Burgoyne spoke again of his wrongs. He had voted against prorogation last June. As soon as the session ended he received a letter from the Secretary at War,[1] informing him it was his Majesty's pleasure that he should return to Boston as soon as he had tried the Bath waters. Burgoyne wrote a long remonstrance, complaining of this severity. He received a second letter, repeating that his Majesty thought his presence of importance to the troops, and ordering him to return as soon as he could do so without any material injury to his health. He

[1] Lord Barrington.

hinted very plainly that this was Germaine's revenge, and to get a man out of the way who had a long account to settle with him. As his return was to be for the good of the troops, he would ask Ministers whether they had taken any effectual steps to release those brave men? They seemed to be forgotten!

Germaine disclaimed any personal enmity—what had happened was a misunderstanding. Gentlemen on the other side of the House were always accusing Ministers of ill-treating their officers—it was thought a singular hardship that the hon. gentleman was ordered to repair to his army at Boston. The hon. gentleman himself had shown it was an order from the King—who might have reasons for thinking it proper that the Commander of that ill-fated army should share all the consequences of that unsuccessful expedition. On this, Fox rose to protest. Such language was unparliamentary. The King could do no act proper for discussion in that House—the Constitution knew no such individual power, and he hoped never would. He would not suffer the idea to go forth that the King acted without advice. Germaine replied that he presumed his Majesty was advised, but *he* had no hand in advising. As to the release of the unhappy men under the Convention, by his Majesty's directions he had written to Sir Henry Clinton, authorising him to ratify the Convention. His mind was totally free from malice. As for the hon. gentleman's instructions, he should not now go into what they were, nor how far they were or were not positive. He wished for an enquiry at a proper season.

On the 1st of December Ministers must have felt their house crumbling over their heads. The irrepressible Temple Luttrell moved for the last weekly returns of the Navy, and pledged himself to prove an embezzlement of more than £370,000 of the money voted in 1771. Next day, in Committee, Buller pleaded the consequences of "a full disclosure of the strength of our marine, at the commencement of a war with a powerful enemy." The gross number of seamen was 77,000, if that was all the hon. gentleman wanted to know. He tried to convince the House that the state of the Navy given last year "was strictly true." There were forty-four ships, besides seventeen others "in various states of forwardness." As for the embezzlement, he sat at the Board at the time mentioned by the hon. gentleman, and affirmed from his own knowledge that there was not the least shadow of proof. Temple Luttrell said Administration wanted to conceal information from the House, not the enemy. If we really had 77,000 seamen employed, such information would strike terror in

the enemy. He then called for the Journals of the House for 1771 to be read; when it appeared that 40,000 seamen were voted for that year, and on an average not more than 31,000 had been employed. £4 per man per month for 40,000 men was £2,080,000. Deducting the navy ordinance at 4s. per man per month, "according to custom," the balance paid over to the Admiralty Board will be £1,990,000. From this, again, deduct £1,612,000, the money actually paid for the seamen employed, and "just £378,000 remains, for which there is no account." It was obvious to the whole world that we had not twenty-five sail of the line fit for sea or home service last year; and as the Admirals who commanded on the 27th of July were both in their places, he hoped they would give the Committee the fullest satisfaction on the reports that had been circulated, to their own dishonour and the nation's disquietude. Enquiries were always treated as "clogging the wheels of government"—it was the usual refuge of bad Ministers. Those of Dionysius and Domitian did the same.

Then Keppel rose. Governor Johnstone had said (in a former debate) that *if Admiral Keppel were to go through the business of the 27th July again, he would not fight the French in the same manner.* Keppel declared he did not, on looking back, wish to alter his conduct in the slightest degree.[1] He referred to Palliser's charges—he was so shocked when he first saw them, that he resolved, in his first resentment, never to set foot on board a ship more. On cooler reflection he had told the First Lord that he would never again sail with the Vice-Admiral of the Blue till his conduct was cleared up. He believed the Vice-Admiral knew who wrote the anonymous letter. He once more acquitted him of want of courage.

On this Palliser rose to vindicate his conduct, and complain of "insidious attacks" made as soon as he set his foot on shore —this was why he made the public appeal which gave such offence to Keppel. He wished the Admiral would speak out if he had anything to say—he was conscious of having done his duty—the Admiral himself had praised him publicly.

Keppel said he had made no secret charges, and he had given a general approbation of *all* the officers under his command—at the same time, he must declare that the signal for the Vice-Admiral to come into his wake was flying from three in the afternoon till eight in the evening on the day of battle, *unobeyed.*

[1] "It was impossible to bring 30 ships against 30 ships, unless both squadrons were equally determined to conquer or perish."

But he did not charge the Vice-Admiral with actual disobedience —he might have reasons to justify his delay—and he was fully persuaded of his personal bravery.

Lord North now tried to create a diversion—he "was very full and very jocular" in vindicating himself and his colleagues from the charge of embezzlement—in the ten years he had been in office he had only missed attending once when any navy business of importance was to be considered—but perhaps the hon. gentleman thinks every day "a navy-day" when he thinks proper to speak.[1] Grants are hardly ever equal to expenditure —there is wear and tear, victualling, ordnance, seamen's wages —what is saved on one head goes to make up a deficiency on another. Perhaps if he said that he and the First Lord were above embezzling, the hon. gentleman would not believe him—he would therefore only say they could not if they wished — the money never came into their hands at all, but every shilling was paid by the Treasury Board to the Treasurer of the Navy. Luttrell repeated his charge — he would prove it. The noble lord thought he could explain it away by a joke—or by laying it on the Treasurer of the Navy, who is since dead—"*dead men tell no tales.*" The noble lord and his compeers may comfort themselves on being exempt from the rack here, but they should remember there are such things as scaffolds for the plunderers of their country.

North asked to be heard a few words "before he was racked." He would "explain the whole intricacy." The £4 a man per month is thus divided—wages 22s.—victualling 30s.—wear and tear 24s.—ordnance for sea service 4s. Any excess on one was made up by savings on others—"or constituted what is called the navy debt." Ellis said a waggon would not hold the papers necessary for such an investigation as the hon. gentleman called for—embezzlement is utterly impossible!

On December 4 Mr. Coke moved for an address to express to his Majesty the displeasure of the House at the Manifesto of the Commissioners. He warned the House that the policy threatened would lead to reprisals—privateers had lately landed men in our own country, and if they did not burn and destroy, it was not because they had not the power, but because we had not set them the example. Mr. MacDonald called the Manifesto "a sober, sensible, well-meant address." He told stories of American cruelties. "Who thrust out the eyes of wounded prisoners? The Americans.

[1] Luttrell had said, "the noble lord in the blue ribbon hardly ever attends when the navy is under consideration."

Who burned Norfolk? A part indeed was burned by the King's troops, but three-fourths were burned by the Americans." What were the cruelties used towards Colonel Campbell? What the behaviour of the Court that tried Colonel Henley? What of the murder of Lieutenant Brown, and the imprisonment of General Phillips for remonstrating? Yet we had used no retaliation! The Proclamation was only a warning not to expect so much lenity in future. By their alliance with France, our natural enemy, the rebels had forfeited all right to clemency—war ought to assume a different character, and the Americans might prepare to be treated, not indeed like wild beasts, but like common enemies. They should now have war in its full vigour—not such as they had had—so tempered with peace it hardly deserved the name of war. He flattered himself it was a happy omen that the friends of America were so alarmed at the Proclamation—he hoped their terrors were forerunners of general consternation in America.

Hans Stanley[1] denounced the Proclamation as an insult to his profession—soldiers were to be converted into butchers. Sir William Howe also spoke against it. Like every other General who came home, he had told Government that the case was hopeless; and, like the rest, had been frowned on for telling the truth. The absurd spectacle was offered to the world of one British General after another coming home angry and in disgrace, and going into Opposition. This day Howe complained that reflections had been cast on his character—perhaps because he had shown too much mildness in the prosecution of the war. He did not know if these attacks originated with Ministers—they had not contradicted them. He took the opportunity of saying a few words about his resignation of his command. He resigned in consequence of a total disregard of his opinion, and his recommendations of meritorious officers. "The war was not left to my management"; and yet when he applied for instructions he frequently could not get them. The noble lord at the head of the Treasury had indeed supported him, but the noble Secretary for America had not used him well—he had often left him without instructions, "to shift for himself at the opening of a campaign." Like all the rest, he wanted an enquiry—that the House might see who was to blame—himself, or the American Secretary. *He was sure no orders sent to America for the conduct of the war could be executed to the satisfaction and advantage of this country, while they went through the hands of the noble lord.*

[1] He held the sinecure office of "Cofferer."

Germaine was surprised at this attack—if he had foreseen it, he would have come prepared—he would defend himself as well as his memory would permit him. He had never dropped an expression prejudicial to the hon. gentleman out of the House—and the House knew he had never dropped one in the House—nor had he ever omitted to second every project, every recommendation sent by the hon. gentleman. He only remembered three exceptions where his recommendations were not *immediately* complied with—one was a Captain Emerie, who had a plan so romantic and imprudent, that he could not believe the General was serious in recommending it. Emerie was to have £1000 to raise one or two thousand German Chasseurs and establish his quarters in Hanover. His horses were to be stallions brought from Poland to mend the breed at New York. It all seemed so extravagant, it was supposed Sir William sent the Captain over to get rid of him. If the war had not been as successful as it might, it was not fair to make him the cause—he was but the humble servant of the Crown. If the hon. general had not instructions, it was because many things depended on unforeseen circumstances—and it is impossible to send letters across the Atlantic every day. He was never more surprised than when he heard the construction put upon the Proclamation. All war that militated against humanity was detestable. The Proclamation only meant that America was no longer to be treated as a child, but as an enemy—as a part of the dominions of France. The Americans had become French, and in future should be treated as Frenchmen. Wanton cruelty could not be patronised by the King—or any Briton—and no British Minister would dare send such orders, nor would any British army obey them. The burning of a warehouse converted into a battery was not to be called cruelty—it was done by every civilised nation in Europe.

Sir William Howe repeated that he wanted an enquiry—on himself, his brother, and the noble lord. Burgoyne said if he had published anything when at the head of his army, which gave gentlemen the idea he meant to be cruel, he had been misunderstood. "Tomahawks and scalping had been restrained by him." Mr. St. Luc de la Corne had said, in a long French letter published in a newspaper, that this caused the desertion of the Indians.

North's insincere disclaimer, and the Attorney-General's praise of the Proclamation as "a sober and conscientious piece of writing," were followed by Johnstone's blunt admission that the Proclamation

did mean "a war of desolation"; it meant nothing else; it could mean nothing else; if he had been there he would have signed it. "If the infernals could be let loose against Congress, he would have approved the measure."

Then the House rejected the censure on the Proclamation by 209 to 123.

The debate in the Lords was more significant still of the contempt in which Administration was held, and of the manner in which it could survive this contempt, even at so dangerous a crisis. Rockingham said he had heard the debate in the Commons, and observed that the defenders of the Proclamation were of two descriptions.[1] One declared it meant nothing worse than that Americans were to be treated as the allies of France, and there were to be no more fruitless attempts at conciliation. These professed to abhor the darker construction put upon the paper. The others spoke without disguise, confessed it meant desolation, and defended it on the ground of necessity. On the whole, he preferred those who did not try to hide their real intentions. In a powerful passage he appealed to the Bench of Bishops—they had hitherto supported the Ministry, believing that the recovery of America was practicable. But this Manifesto says a new era has arisen. America is relinquished, and a new species of war is denounced—America is to be destroyed. He would therefore put this question to the Right Reverend Bench—Was the policy of King Herod good or bad? Was it justifiable in the sight of God? Was it agreeable to the principles of Jesus Christ? If they thought not, he hoped, for the sake of their own consciences, and of the credit of the religion they professed, they would not give a public countenance to measures of blood and slaughter.

After this noble appeal Rockingham went on to point out how terribly the Americans and the French could retaliate upon our vulnerable English and Irish coasts. He reminded them of the "infinite alarm and distraction" caused last summer by a rumour that the French intended a landing near Newcastle. Lord Percy knew how the North and East Riding Militia were harassed, by a forced march of 400 miles, on a rumour which had no foundation but the fears of the people. He referred to the landing of Paul Jones at Whitehaven, and his plundering of Lord Selkirk's house in Scotland. But his chief fear was for the

[1] "He happened the other night to be present in an assembly of gentlemen, where the very paper now under consideration, came to be the subject of conversation."—*Parliamentary History.*

West India Islands—there the mischief could be done with impunity, and would be irreparable. Even Jamaica, the most powerful and best defended, never cultivated the lands within seven miles of the coast until the buccaneers ceased to infest those seas; the inhabitants knew that the damage of a single night could not be repaired in a century.

He then returned to the Manifesto—"it was replete with perfidy, cunning, and barbarity." It invited submission, but did not provide protection for those who submitted; it contained the fullest proofs that we had given up all thought of connection with America. The actual situation of our army showed the same. It was generally understood that Sir Henry Clinton had written home for a very considerable reinforcement, which he also understood could not be spared him. Sir Henry was only acting on the defensive.

Suffolk professed the greatest astonishment at the interpretation put on the Proclamation—his colleagues and himself never meant what was imputed to them. The Proclamation only reminded the Americans of the blessings they were about to forego, and the tenderness with which they had been treated. He asked if there was a line in it that bore out the charge of "Herodian cruelty"?

Dr. Hinchcliffe, Bishop of Peterborough, said he could not be silent after what the Marquess had said. For once he would address their lordships, not as statesmen, but as Christians. If the House did not censure the Proclamation, it would be an indelible disgrace to the name of Briton. The tendency of the threats was evident. He referred to "that fatal day," when the Petition of Congress was rejected, and the Americans thought there was no alternative between unconditional submission and independence. "Read this Manifesto, and compare its theory with the practice of Colonel Butler, and be very cautious how you go a step farther. If this is the Christianity we are now going to propagate among the Indians, they had better be left in ignorance—let us not take from them their plea for mercy—let them still be able to say they have never heard of Christ."

The Earl of Derby urged the Bishops to look on the Manifesto in its proper light—"an instrument of horror." Ministers could neither conduct war nor make peace. I appeal to your lordships, whether almost every general and admiral has not returned disgusted? Abingdon called it "this horrid Manifesto." He was ashamed to be a peer of that House. Montaigne said the souls of Kings and cobblers were cast in the same mould. What made

the difference between that House and the lower orders, but that they were more civilised, liberal, compassionate, forbearing, than those whom chance had placed under them? "One word I will add to those right reverend prelates, who by voting for these unchristian-like measures, are now up to their necks in the blood of America; and it is this, 'Hear what has been said, Go ye, and repent—not in your lawn sleeves dyed with blood, but in sackcloth and ashes.'"

After this, he made a fierce attack on Ministers—"puppets in office," moved by the string of obedience from behind the curtain—to whom the keynote of murder was long ago given in these words: "*We have passed the Rubicon, and we must kill the Americans, or the Americans will kill us.*" In the plainest terms Abingdon expressed his disbelief in Bute's late disclaimers of influence,—"dust that has been used to blind the eyes of this deluded country, dust under which others hope to hide themselves." He plainly hinted at "offenders who, in revenge for our driving out the Stuarts, have made the crown of England not worth the wearing of the House of Brunswick." The Manifesto says Congress was not authorised to reject our offers —I make the same objection to the legislature of this country—it has assumed powers to which it has no right; the Constitution is lost; the rights of Englishmen are subject to its unlimited tyranny. The hierarchy, who used to talk of Kings as the Lord's Anointed, now remove the supremacy from the King to the Parliament. "This system must be changed. Corruption, which is its principle, must be done away. Let the King reign in the hearts of his people—he has reigned long enough in their purses."

Gower said that "burning towns, and even desolating a country," was a "limited, justifiable and defensive mode" of war. Chatham bombarded Havre in the late war. As for scalping, when Chatham censured that species of warfare he had proved that Chatham sanctioned it himself!

Richmond said that the war had always been carried on barbarously—two years ago Congress published a regular and full account of barbarities exercised by his Majesty's officers. It was reprinted in the *Leyden Gazette*, till the editor said it stained his pages. He had lately received a letter from the Jerseys, which said we had not a single friend there—the reason being that our army had behaved so ill. He had heard Sir William Howe tell the American Secretary to his face, "and in the hearing of a large assembly," that it was "impossible for

Great Britain to be successful in America while he had the conduct of the war." Let them think a moment who said this—no less a man than the late Commander-in-Chief in America, who had the confidence of Administration if any officer had it! Already the war has cost 33 millions, and will cost 8 or 9 more every year it lasts. How are we to raise the money? From the alarming number of bankruptcies money is so scarce it is hardly to be had at any rate. Everything shows a declining commerce and a sinking credit. He compared Necker with North—Necker refused any emolument for bringing the French finances out of disorder; North had got the Cinque Ports, his lady had Bushy Park, his children were all provided for by places held in trust, or reversions—he had even stooped to "go a hunting" for the reversion of the Comptroller's place in the port of London, now held by the Duke of Newcastle—he was "covered with places, sinecures, reversions," for no other merit than losing America! Richmond brought up Atkinson and the Civil List, and said bluntly that reform should take place from the highest to the lowest—his Majesty should set the example! For himself, he offered to accept any employment he was thought capable of, civil or military, on the plan of M. Necker—without reward or emolument. He would even go to America, if it was thought necessary—not on a fruitless, impracticable errand, to subdue, but to endeavour to bring about a friendly intercourse.

Lord Lyttleton said America had been cruel, America had been inhuman—not Great Britain! Who burnt Norfolk? Who treated prisoners in the most inhuman way? America set the example of cruelty, and if we followed it she had herself to thank. What might seem humanity would turn out to be weakness.

Grafton gave the debate a turn still more embarrassing to Administration. After saying that he was unwell, but he could not look his children in the face if he did not come there to discharge his conscience, he got upon the French Treaty—the last great cause of our misfortunes was our not having timely notice of this. As the affair was now over, he might ask "the noble viscount in the green ribbon" (Lord Stormont) to tell the House whether he had an early notice of the Treaty? and whether he communicated his knowledge to "the noble viscount in office (Weymouth) in a convenient time"? But first, he would inform Stormont that on the 5th of March, having heard a treaty had been signed on the 6th of February, he asked Lord Weymouth whether he had any intimation of such a treaty from the

Ambassador in Paris? Weymouth replied that he knew nothing except from report. The same answer was given to Mr. Fox in the other House.

Stormont said as the question involved a censure on his conduct he would reply. He hoped he had not been so neglectful of his duty as to be ignorant that such a negotiation, leading to such a treaty, was on foot. And "as he was industrious in discovering, so he was punctual in communicating" what he had learned. Noble lords on the other side of the House knew so much—perhaps they knew what he was going to tell them. Had they heard of any other treaty than that signed on the 6th of February? a treaty, he was free to say, only meant to impose on the people of America and the nations of Europe, as merely commercial; the real designs of both America and France were concealed by that treaty. If their lordships did not know it, he would tell them; there was another treaty—far different. He saw a copy of it, in which there was this remarkable expression, denoting the complexion of the whole—"the wings of Great Britain must be clipped, lest she should soar too high." Some articles of this secret treaty went not only to the independence of the Colonies, but to the dismemberment of the British Empire, and the parcelling out its insular and other American possessions, part to France, part to America.

Grafton replied that it was as he thought—the Ambassador had done his duty—Ministers alone were to blame. He asked why this information was withheld—he himself had put a question——

Weymouth said he recollected it—he thought it was the 5th of March—and if he were questioned in the same manner again he believed he should answer in the same manner; for though the Ambassador did send him an account of the treaty being signed, he "must confess it did not bring conviction to his mind"—and without such conviction, or a certain knowledge, he could not, consistently with his own judgment, say he knew of any such treaty. Shelburne said it came to this—that after putting the nation to the expense of an Embassy the despatches of Ambassadors are treated as waste-paper. It was extraordinary how all the persons employed by Administration united in one general cry of complaint—Generals, Admirals, Ambassadors! One General tells the Secretary to his face that the war cannot succeed while he is in office; another says he gives impossible orders, and charges him with treachery, misrepresentation, and betrayal of private correspondence. What officer is mad or stupid enough to trust his

reputation, perhaps his life, to such men? This allusion to Keppel called forth such enthusiasm from those admitted below the Bar, that they "beat their canes on the floor," and the House was cleared in consequence.

The incredible neglect of Administration came out again in the debate of December 10, on the State of the British Army. Barré showed that in Dominica—whose harbour had been fortified at a cost of £70,000—there were but 41 men in the garrison to manage 160 pieces of cannon, and the Governor had written home for more troops to prevent the stores in garrison from being stolen!

CHAPTER LXXVII

THE STATE OF THE NATION

"Lord North cannot be surprised at my indignation at the number of persons who so shamefully avoided attending yesterday, which made the majority so much less than it ought to have been." (Fox's motion of censure for sending Keppel to sea with so small a force.)—*The King to Lord North*, March 4, 1779.

"The list of the House of Commons has, I trust, been so accurately prepared, that there will be no difficulty in knowing whose attention must be quickened. . . . I hope Sir Ralph Payne has been strongly spoke to, and Messrs. Doyley and Strachey. The like may not be thrown away on Charles Herbert. . . . I am strongly of opinion that the general officers who through Parliamentary favour have got governments, on opposing, should lose them. This is very different from removing them from their military commissions."—*The King to Lord North*, March 5, 1779.

"It is impossible to be more satisfied than I am with the handsome majority of this morning. It shews a zeal in the House of Commons . . . but it is by this also not less evident how thoroughly Lord North must have spoke out to members. . . . I wish to see the list of the defaulters who have either employments or military governments." (Fox's motion on the State of the Navy.)—*The King to Lord North*, March 9, 1779.

We now enter on a parliamentary struggle as gallant and determined on one side, and as unworthy on the other, as the actual warfare being waged in America. The little band of Opposition seemed to gather courage as they fought—always out-voted, they always returned to the charge with new motions, which were rejected by that hireling Parliament with as much damage to Administration as our pitiful American victories inflicted on the cause of British supremacy. In most of these encounters Fox was the leader. His motions were always lost; but the debates, no longer secret, went forth to the country. The days were gone when a faithful House of Commons protected itself from the vengeance of a tyrant, or an unfaithful one from the wrath of the people, by debating behind closed doors. There were no reporters, but Opposition reported themselves, and the helplessness of the North Administration, even though bolstered up by the King's favour and the secret-service money—filched from the Civil List—is seen in their feeble, wriggling speeches, their damaging con-

fessions, and the absence of the smallest attempt to answer the more serious accusations of their adversaries, except by feeble abuse or flippant jests. The student asks himself why the country sat so quiet under the revelations of corruption and waste of public money, now published from one end of the kingdom to the other; and the even more alarming revelations of incompetence and dishonesty, which were laying the country open to invasion, and the empire to dismemberment? Ministers pretended to believe that the loss of America meant the absolute ruin of Great Britain—her fall from her place as a Great Power to something less than a second-rate one; yet they went on lying about the state of the Navy, disgusting their most valuable officers, showing themselves at the same moment bellicose and neglectful—always behaving as though they could conquer America with words, and quiet England with lies.

Of course the losses and miseries of the war did not weigh so heavily on England without weighing still more heavily on Ireland. From this time Ireland is frequently the subject of debate. On February 15, 1779, Lord Newhaven addressed the House "in a very pathetic manner, in favour of Ireland." If gentlemen would but take off those burdensome restrictions that lay upon her trade! The imports for which Glasgow, Bristol, Liverpool, and other seaport towns so loudly called, were not more than £9000 and a fraction in their favour, and for this sum they stretched all their interest to distress unhappy Ireland. He told a dreadful story of a man whose cattle were seized for rent, and who prayed for leave to bleed them, that his perishing family might subsist for some days longer on the blood! The export Bill of last session was of no use if Parliament did not grant trade—if Ireland could not take commodities in return in the West India markets, she could do no trade. He asked for a Bill for free import trade between Ireland and the West Indies. Sir Thomas Egerton objected—the distresses of Britain were as great as those of Ireland—we must think of ourselves. This was no time to create disturbances at home by giving up the trade of the country. The people did not even sit easy under their own misfortunes. Edinburgh had been for some days in possession of a mob;[1]

[1] This affair has a sinister importance as the first of the anti-Catholic riots which were soon to convulse the whole country.

A house "near the foot of Chalmer's Close," was to be used as a "popish chapel, and priest's residence." Copies of a letter were dropped about the streets of Edinburgh, calling on the citizens to meet at Leith Wynd "to pull down that pillar of Popery lately erected there." It was signed, "A Protestant." Some

London had been offended by one; the whole people felt and loudly lamented their distress. He moved that the consideration of this business be postponed to this day six months.

Sir George Yonge eagerly seconded Egerton—it was understood last year that no more was to be granted to Ireland. He would be glad to "indulge" Ireland, if it could be done without injuring Britain. The matter with Ireland was the pensioners and placemen she had to support. At present England had nothing left to bestow—burdened with taxes, involved in a war, sinking under every calamity, we could not throw away the little trade and manufacture we had left. North was astonished at Ireland asking for more before there was time to see how the indulgences granted already worked. Nugent—usually a supple tool of Ministers—said Irish distresses could not go on much longer without danger to England—some relief must be given or there would be a rebellion. Lord Beauchamp added that Ireland was unable even to pay for the militia.[1]

When, on February 17, Sir William Howe rose to move for Papers relating to the conduct of the American War, he said plainly that he meant to make it appear who was to blame that the war was not ended last campaign—the Commanders of the forces or Ministers at home. Lord Howe said he wished to

idle boys assembled, and began breaking windows, went on to destroy the furniture, and at last set fire to the house, which they burnt out. The City Guard turned out too late to prevent the mischief. Next evening the rioters assembled again, and attacked the Popish chapel in Blackfriars' Wynd, which they destroyed; and then went to the houses of several private families, known to be Papists, broke their windows, destroyed their property, and insulted them. After which, "not content with carrying their savage fury against the Papists only, they assembled in the evening on the College Green, with intent to pull down the house of Dr. Robertson, and others, who they thought favoured the Bill for repealing the old penal laws against the Papists, made in King William's time." Fortunately a party of dragoons arrived before they could effect their purpose, and "they dispersed, on being assured by the Magistrates that all thoughts of bringing in the bill were laid aside."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1779, p. 98.

This happened on the 2nd and 3rd of February. On the 9th, which was a day of Fasting and Humiliation in Scotland, there was a riot in Glasgow—the mob burning the house of every Papist they could discover. Some of the rioters were arrested, but the Magistrates "were obliged to release them, to prevent worse consequences." Lord Weymouth wrote to tell the Lord Justice that no such Bill was intended to be brought.

[1] On the 16th Lord Newhaven returned to the charge. He told the House that the trade of the last ten years showed a decrease of exports from England of £600,000—£716,000 in the last two years. The exports from Ireland had also decreased £155,000 in the last two years.

retire from all public men and public measures—but with honour. North professed great respect for the two Commanders—he had never censured them, nor blamed any part of their conduct! Fox, while saying the forces sent out were inadequate, said that ten times the force would have been equally inadequate. "It was the force of justice that resisted them, and that was a force never to be subdued." In the course of his speech he referred to the case of a young man who was to be tried capitally next day for breaking Sir Hugh Palliser's windows—or rather, for being pleased at Admiral Keppel's acquittal. When Sir William Howe sent over the news of his having "obtained a conquest," and the town was illuminated, a Quaker brought an action for the breaking of his windows because he had not illuminated; but Judge Willes decided that the act was justified by the occasion—the Quaker had "resisted the general joy." Then look at the riots in Edinburgh, where the mob has obliged Government to tell them that they not only will not pass the Bill in favour of popery, but will not allow it to be brought in. Did the Attorney-General proceed for the murder of Mr. Clarke at Brentford? But now a boy is to be hanged because he hallooed for Admiral Keppel, whom the Ministry wanted to murder, and are hanging this unhappy youth instead.[1]

Next day Wilkes moved for expunging the Resolution for his expulsion. It was rejected by 202 to 122. Fox was induced to withdraw his motion for the dismissal of Sir Hugh Palliser (who had resigned two of his offices, and vacated his seat in Parliament). Next day he moved for the papers taken in the *Licorne* and *Pallas*, respecting the state of the French fleet.

In the Debate on the Budget of February 24, North admitted the great difficulty he had had in negotiating a loan, owing to the very high terms insisted on "by the monied people." He had twice broken off, but had been obliged to go back and accept. He explained that last year's loan had suffered by falling into the hands of "adventurers, and persons of small property," who got frightened at the fall of Stocks, "ran to market and glutted it"; so that before the Budget was opened "the omnium was below par." He had now made a treaty with the subscribers

[1] The only reference to be found is the following (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1779, p. 99): "February 17. At the opening of the session at the Old Bailey, three young men, John McKay, Robert Rickwood, and William Smith, were arraigned for a riot, and for being concerned in breaking the windows of Sir H. Palliser and Captain Hood, on Friday the 12th instant; but before the trial came on, the Attorney-General thought proper to order a *nolle prosequi* to stop proceedings in the capital charge."

for seven millions (it ought to have been eight); and now the question was how to provide for the present year. In the midst of a war he was convinced an open subscription would never answer. Then, feeling that this was an alarming statement, he began to boast, in his usual fashion, of our unexhausted resources. We could still carry on the war with vigour—if the terms of the loan were hard, our credit was good. He was very urgent for raising the necessary supplies within the year—Holland had done it. It would involve great sacrifices, and many gratifications must be given up, but the honour, glory, nay, the very existence of the country, might require it. It must be admitted that the war had not been altogether equal to our expectations. But there was every ground to hope in another year it would be better. Meanwhile he meant to draw upon the East India Company—in whose success the country ought to participate. Ending with compliments to Necker, a flattering comparison of our finances with those of France, and an entreaty to trust Ministers. Fox asked how many years we had been told that next year would be better?

Next day North "opened his Budget." It was a dismal occasion. He had to own that the house and servant taxes had not brought in what he hoped. He proposed a surcharge of 5 per cent. on the Customs, and a tax of a penny a mile on post-chaises. He would exempt the brewery, because beer was a great article of consumption with the lower orders of the people. He thought of taking away the privilege of franking letters—here there was such a general murmur that he stopped short, and proposed taking off the prohibition of foreign cambrics instead. The prohibition was useless—the cambrics were only smuggled. Again he said the supplies must be raised within the year. Not that we were at the end of our resources—we still had many and great. There were the annuities, and then the Charter of the East India Company was near expiring. A deplorable debate was closed by Mr. Bailey complaining of the increased sugar tax. He and his family already paid £30,000 a year in duties—planters could not bear it in the present state of things in the West Indies. As a parting thrust, he reminded the noble lord that he had offered to take the rum contract for half, or even less than half, of the 4s. 4d. a gallon paid to Atkinson.

On the 3rd of March the House was so crowded that more than fifty members were obliged to sit in the side galleries. Fox was going to move for a censure on the Admiralty for

sending Admiral Keppel to sea with too small a fleet, and North in alarm had beaten up all his forces. Fox laid bare all the old story, with the addition that the papers found in the *Licorne* and *Pallas* were still in part withheld, and the Admiral's letter, sent with them, was kept back. The debate ended in a scene—Fox put questions to Keppel, and Mr. Brett desired the answers should be taken down. In a moment there was an uproar—North and Lord Howe rose at the same moment, and the first thing that could be heard was Howe demanding that Admiral Keppel's *evidence* be written down. North objected—it was extremely improper—this was not an enquiry—it would be evidence on one side. After a "prodigious uproar," the Speaker said the evidence, if received, must be taken in writing. There was a fresh uproar, North lost his temper, and the Speaker, after calling Almighty God to witness that he was going to give his real opinion, said evidence could not be committed in writing, unless an enquiry was before the House. When order was restored, Lord Mulgrave made a very long speech, trying to demolish the damning evidence of the captured papers. They were undated, they were no proof that any such ships as were described were in existence—they only said anchorage must be found when the ships did exist. Both Keppel and Lord Howe spoke, and North weakly tried to explain away his own words. At half-past one in the morning, the House divided; when the numbers were, for Fox's motion 170, against 204. It was believed Opposition would have carried the motion but for North's rallying the country gentlemen and the waverers, by making common cause with the Admiralty, and declaring that a vote against the First Lord was a vote against Administration. He lost his temper in a way quite unusual with him—it was plain that he understood the gravity of the occasion.

The House was, if possible, fuller still on the 8th, when Fox moved "That the State of the Navy, on the breaking out of the War with France, was very unequal to what this House and the Nation were led to expect, from the declarations of Ministers, and the great sums of money granted, and debts incurred." In this debate, Lord Howe, in seconding the motion, said that Administration and he had an affair to settle. He wished to say that he was deceived into his command, deceived while he retained it; tired and disgusted, he desired permission to resign, but would not do so while a superior enemy remained in the American seas. As soon as Admiral Byron's arrival removed that impediment,

he had gladly returned. A thorough recollection of what he suffered induced him to decline any risk of returning to such a situation. He would never serve while the present Ministers remained in office—he could render no essential service to his country, and he would risk his professional character. North insisted that the First Lord of the Admiralty was "no more censurable than any other of his Majesty's servants"—he had only one voice. He did not explain why Ministers had different offices, if they had not different responsibilities. He contradicted every fact which had been stated. He went into computations of the grants, the manner of voting them, and of making up the accounts. He was totally unconscious that any cause of disgust had been given to Lord Howe—he was sure that they entertained the highest respect for him as an officer and a man. And as "the honourable Admiral" (Keppel) had succeeded in protecting our trade, he thought it a very wise measure to send Mr. Keppel to sea. The event showed that we were equal to France, if not superior, in the month of June. The House had declared that the evidence against this view was not sufficient for "the sanctity of a vote." What Ministers had done was the best that could have been done, and nobody was to blame. And at one o'clock in the morning the House, by 246 to 174, said so too.

The State of Public Credit and the Terms of the Loan were debated on the 12th. Hartley showed that "with any common degree of forecast and arrangement of measures" North might have saved "a perpetual rent-charge upon this country of £150,000 a year, for ever, on the loan of this year; and another perpetual charge last year of half as much." All the mortgaged funds and taxes he had imposed on the country for the support of "this cursed American war," in four years, amounted to £1,100,000 a year, and from 15 to 20 millions of outstanding debt still unprovided for. When will Ministers relent? Have we an ally in Europe? Is not every Power in Europe conspiring our downfall? Spain is under arms—has been arming publicly for above a year. He could prove it from those who had been aboard Spanish ships. Yet Ministers pretend that forty sail of the line, ready for sea, are only to preserve neutrality. "Spain is between you and America." Then in the most emphatic manner he declared that the Commissioners had not been empowered to make any explicit offers whatever. The offer was neither more nor less than this: Lay down your arms, break faith with your ally, and commit yourselves unconditionally

to the mercy of those very Ministers who have shown themselves your bitterest enemies.[1]

On March 22, on the Motion for Printing the Army Estimates, Sir P. J. Clerke said that the Army Extraordinaries amounted to the enormous sum of over two millions—a million more than they ever were in any other war,[2] or in the present war—though, as he grimly remarked, last year there was another army to maintain. Only a single copy of the paper lay before the House—how could gentlemen study it with proper attention? Half of them would know nothing about the matter! He said this concerned the public at large—those out of doors as much as those within. He moved that an account of the Army Extraordinaries should be printed for the use of members. North opposed this as totally unprecedented. It was true the estimate concerned the public, but if by the public the hon. gentleman meant readers of newspapers and coffee-house readers, he could never allow they had a right to see it. The real public—the representatives of the Commons—had; but people outside had no right to see it till it appeared on the Journals of the House. Barré retorted that the coffee-house readers were the people who paid for the Army Extraordinaries, and had a right to know how their money was spent. The Extraordinaries of 1778 amounted to near £40 a man throughout the army—and this enormous expense was incurred in a year remarkable for its ill-success—a year when nothing had been done, and we had fewer soldiers to maintain in America than ever before. If they had ever been larger, in what year was it? North replied that he had not expected such a question, but as well as his memory served on a sudden, he should suppose 1761 or 1762. He objected to printing the estimate. Barré retorted that it was impossible to investigate the account properly from the paper on the table—it was written on thirty-six sheets of paper, and was extremely intricate.

[1] On the 11th Sir Joseph Mawbey attempted to show that, by the 6th of Queen Anne, Lord George Germaine was precluded by his offices from sitting in the House of Commons. Mawbey's speech is full of most interesting references to the state of parties in Queen Anne's time, and the fear lest Anne should restore the Stuarts. There was great fear of a Jacobite Ministry, especially after the threatened invasion of the Old Pretender, in 1707.

[2] The increase was appalling. Extraordinaries of King William's nine years' war: £1,200,000. Of Queen Anne's eleven years' war: £2,000,000. Total of these two wars of twenty years: £3,200,000. Extraordinaries of 1778, voted by Parliament in 1779: £3,026,137.—*Facts: Addressed . . . generally to all the Subjects of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1780.

He had come down on the 20th to get a sight of it, but could not see it—the clerks were making four copies for the War Office. The motion for printing was lost by 104 to 130.

The same day Fox moved a vote of Censure on Administration for not sending Reinforcements to Lord Howe at New York. He said the arguments of Ministers against his motions reminded him of what Hobbes said—that there were men who for the sake of argument, when their emolument depended on that argument, would maintain that the three angles of a triangle are not equal to two right angles. North called the motion a strange one—the hon. gentleman blames us for not sending a force which he says does not exist. North went so far as to charge Fox with falsehood, and quoted Pope's lines—

> "Destroy his fib or sophistry in vain,
> The creature's at his dirty work again."

Then, feeling he had gone too far, he said he did not mean to apply the words in an offensive sense! The debate took a very personal turn. Governor Johnstone referred to a pamphlet just published on the *Transactions of the Fleet under Lord Howe*. It was a violent attack on Ministers, and Johnstone hinted that Howe wrote it himself. The anonymous author spoke of "a gentleman, once a sea-officer," who obtruded himself into the society of the officers in New York, and was the loudest to bewail the deplorable situation, and the "desperate card Lord Howe was forced to play." This gentleman was represented as saying then that "the First Lord of the Admiralty was delaying succour on purpose to ruin the Admiral. And now this gentleman says that Lord Howe had a superiority over the French fleet, and ought to be called to account for not availing himself of it." Johnstone declared this was not true—he never obtruded himself. Directly he heard the French fleet had appeared, he went to Sandy Hook in the night and offered his poor services. He never deplored the situation. He thought it a "lucky circumstance" that the French came, and said so. He never said Howe had a superiority then—on the contrary, when Lord Howe talked of going out and offering battle, he told him he had not sufficient force; but he could defend the harbour. He went on with these revelations, carping at everything Howe had done, and not one ministerialist called him to order for indecency or indiscretion in revealing secrets to the enemy.

Howe said he knew nothing of the pamphlet till it was sent to him in the country—but he guessed the author. While still in

America he knew that Johnstone had said his fleet was superior to d'Estaing's. But his fleet was not so well manned. It was true that when the alarm came of the Toulon fleet being near the Hook, all sorts of persons, many of whom had never been to sea, offered their services, and he gave them infinite credit for their "spirited conduct"; but he would be unworthy of a naval command if he called ships so filled well manned. The consequence proved it—each time he put to sea, and sailed after d'Estaing, his sick increased amazingly, and he was obliged to land them—once he landed more than 360 at a time—for their recovery, and to prevent those that were well being encumbered in case of an action, which he expected every day. He would not allude to any experience he might possess, if he could not support his opinion by argument, and "appeal to every seaman who knows what service is." But he assured the gentleman that Admiral Howe would not apply to Captain Johnstone to teach him the elements of his profession. To this Johnstone retorted that though only a captain, he had seen as much service as the Admiral, and been in more battles. There was a long wrangle as to the real state of Howe's fleet, the number of his seamen, etc., and Howe repeated that he was "deceived, neglected, and injured" by Administration — the First Lord was his persistent enemy. Every statement made by one side was denied by the other—even to Johnstone's declarations that he had never seen such plentiful markets as at New York and Philadelphia. The troops lived, if anything, too well "for the hardy deeds of a soldier." Things were dear, not because they were scarce, but because there was such a great plenty of money circulated by such a fleet and army. Sir John Wrottesley, who was in Philadelphia at the time, said he was amazed at what the Governor said about plenty—he himself shared in the distresses of the army, and had often found it very difficult to obtain the necessaries of life. The motion of Censure was lost by 133 to 209.

On March 30, there was a motion made by the Duke of Manchester for papers relating to an incident which the *Annual Register* says had not been disproved, but is scarcely credible, even of an Administration which forgot to send Commanders their orders. It was that, some time after orders were despatched for the evacuation of Philadelphia, a fleet of victuallers had been suffered to depart from Ireland for that city in total ignorance of the intention! After entering the Delaware the vessels escaped narrowly and by accident from being captured. The

motion was objected to, on the usual ground of affording intelligence to the enemy; and also, that, even if it really happened, as no harm had resulted enquiry was unnecessary.[1]

[1] This motion is not given in the *Parliamentary History*.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

THE STATE OF THE NAVY

"I never allow myself to form plans in my imagination for exertion and enterprise upon the enemy, without continually meeting a complete check or stop, from the want of the force, both of land and sea, that is employed in North America . . . the great land force as well as sea force in that part, the number of transports, or victuallers, of ordnance ships and other store ships, employ the largest stock of seamen belonging to this country, and therefore, till I can see my way in this great consideration, I must be rather silent, and content myself with the hopes, though not the certainty, of being able to face the French wherever they may suddenly shew themselves."—*Admiral Keppel's Paper, copied by the King.* (The King sent the copy to Lord North, "for your own inspection, therefore do not want to have it returned."—Letter of April 28, 1778.)

"When I undertook this great trust, I resolved not to make, but to surmount difficulties. I made no complaints. I exposed no neglect. I divulged no secrets . . . this confidence has been ill-requited. . . . The Board of Admiralty have, without a moment's hesitation, ordered me to prepare for a trial for my life and honour . . . on charges the least inquiry would have shewn to be as malicious and ill-founded as they have been since adjudged. . . . To call an officer to a trial for his life, and then to limit him in his defence by their discretion, is so glaring an injustice . . . that it is unnecessary for me to lay it open to your Majesty's goodness and wisdom. . . . I humbly implore your Majesty's permission not to go again to sea under men on whom, I have learned from experience, I cannot depend for that support which is necessary for every commander."—*Admiral Keppel to the King*, March, 1779.

IN the midst of the constitutional struggle the affairs of the Company came up again, on the 10th of April.

The unfortunate Lord Pigot, Governor of Madras, imprisoned in August, 1777, by his own Council, for opposing them in their dealings with the Rajah of Tanjore,[1] died in captivity in May, 1778. His brother, Admiral Pigot, gave the House a full account

[1] Pigot defended Madras against Lally in 1759. The notorious East India contractor, Paul Benfield, claimed a large part of the revenues of the Rajah of Tanjore, which he said had been assigned to him by the Nabob of Arcot, for a debt. This was not true, nor was there any reason why the Rajah's revenues should pay the Nabob's debts. Pigot opposed his Council, who wished to allow the claim—the Company was heavily in Benfield's debt.

of the transaction. Lord Pigot was offered ten lacs of pagodas to withhold the reinstatement of the Rajah only for a short time; and on his refusal, was offered five lacs more—£600,000 in all. As he would not yield, the Council placed him under arrest, and deposed him. The Admiral declared that his brother died so poor that his son-in-law had to sell all his houses and effects in India to pay his debts there. George Dawson, a member of the Council of Madras, was examined. He said he had always voted with Lord Pigot, because he thought him in the right. Dawson was offered a considerable bribe to stay away from Council, particularly on the day when the sending Mr. Russel as resident to Tanjore was to be debated. The Nabob's sons made the offer. There was much recrimination in the House—some attacking Pigot, others defending him; but no one ventured to justify his imprisonment, and the best argument of those who upheld the Council was, that this was the Company's business, and the House had no right to meddle.

The Directors were strong enough to force North to bring in the Bill for continuing to the Company its territorial possessions, for a time to be limited.[1] The measure took the House by surprise, and after one short and angry debate it passed without a division.

Pigot's ruin was owing to his having resisted the claims of the creditors of the Nabob of Arcot, to be paid out of the revenues of Tanjore. Paul Benfield, the chief of the many vampires who sucked the blood of India in those days, had begun as a military engineer, and in that capacity had made the famous fortifications, under the expense of which the Company had declared itself almost bankrupt. But he soon saw a better way to fortune—in 1773 he turned money-lender, and lent the Nabob of Arcot money at exorbitant interest to invade Tanjore. The revenues of a part of the Carnatic were even made over to him, as a sort of receiver-general, that he might reimburse himself. At this moment Lord Pigot arrived at Madras as Governor, and refused to allow Benfield to profit further by these assignments of territory. He also suspended him for disobedience. But Paul was stronger than Pigot, and the unprecedented sight was seen of a Council imprisoning and deposing a Governor because he would not connive at their jobs. Benfield, however, was not reinstated,—a circumstance of which he complained,—and as the new Governor, Sir Thomas Rumbold,—by no means a person of overstrained notions,—did not encourage him, Paul came to England

[1] May 19. North promised that the new Charter should be proposed next year.

and began to trade in Elections. He bought up rotten boroughs, and returned no fewer than eight members in the Election of 1780. It is scarcely necessary to say that he and "his tail" supported North.[1]

On April 19 Fox moved for the removal of the Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty, from his office and from his Majesty's presence and councils. He had given notice of his intention before the Easter recess. He recapitulated the facts —the waste of public money, the inadequate state of the fleet in June, 1778, the neglect to reinforce Lord Howe, the abandoning the trade and fortresses in the Mediterranean. If the House called this an aggregate charge—Mr. Wilkes was expelled on an aggregate charge. It was admitted then that no one of the charges against him was sufficient, but taken collectively they were. He was then too young to have a seat in that House, but he was present at the debates. He expected the persons who took the lead in that business would oppose the present motion—he hoped they would either abstain from opposition now or acknowledge that they acted unjustly then.

Mulgrave was put up to answer Fox. Fox had referred to the court-martial now trying Palliser, and had remarked on the fact that four of the witnesses most favourable to Palliser at Keppel's trial were sitting on it.[2] This, Mulgrave said, reflected on the honour of the Navy. He got very angry over it—("Mr. Fox shaking his head in token that the noble lord had misunderstood him"). When he was cooler, Mulgrave began to defend Sandwich.[3] Five or six such motions had been negatived,

[1] On the fall of North's Ministry, Benfield returned to India, in the same ship with Lord Macartney, the new Governor of Madras. The voyage round the Cape was long in those days—Macartney had ample time for studying Mr. Benfield, and he came to the conclusion that Paul would be quite capable of deposing another Governor. He was therefore not allowed to reside at Madras for some years. He finally, however, made a fortune of about £400,000—chiefly out of the Nabob of Arcot—that is, out of the revenues of Tanjore. Thus did one iniquity work with another. Later, he again returned to England, took to speculation, "commanded through the funds the money market of Europe," and "had the commercial credit of England in his keeping." But at last his house failed, his effects were seized, he fled to France, and died there in such poverty that the English residents subscribed for his funeral and grave.—MACKNIGHT. WRAXALL.

[2] Digby, Peyton, Robinson, and Goodall.

[3] Mulgrave said if anything in the present court-martial was "management" he alone was the guilty person. He ought to have been on the Court, but knowing the rage for detraction and calumny which now prevailed, he had asked to be excused.

because judged ill-founded. He had never heard that five or six resolutions, each declared not to be true, amounted to one general truth. He moved to leave out the last words, and to say instead, "the navy being in a better state than ever." There was not a more able, active, or knowing Minister than the present First Lord.

Keppel and Howe both took part in this debate. By 221 to 118 the House rejected the censure.

On the 23rd the same motion was made in the Lords by the Earl of Bristol. He gave a detailed statement of the naval force of Great Britain, France, and Spain; and of our naval expenditure. He showed that in July, 1778, France had 69 ships of the line fit for sea, and 11 more building at Toulon. Spain had 59, besides 30 frigates, "and innumerable other vessels, as galleys, xebeques, barks, etc." Total, 140 of the House of Bourbon. He had the different lists in his hand, if any lord pleased to examine them—he wished any would, "to show what my intelligence is; though I know it does not differ much from that which his lordship has had, however ill requited the poor man has been, who at every risk gave it." He next gave the list of the Royal Navy, as delivered to himself when he first went to the Admiralty Board, in 1771—139 ships of the line, thirteen 50-gun ships ("which the noble lord says are never of the line"), and 230 frigates—in all, 382.[1] In March, 1778, they tell us there are 74 ships of the line in commission; in May, 78; in August, 88. Yet Admiral Keppel returned to sea in August with the same 30 with which he had fought in July, crippled as they were. By the lists at least 33 ships, which, according to the lists, we had to spare, were unaccounted for. Then the expense—in these last seven years there is an increase in the grants to the Navy of nearly 7 millions sterling—"a sum of itself sufficient to have doubled the navy of England."

Sandwich rose. He declared his conscious innocence, his sedulous attention to business, and the happy effects in the present flourishing condition of the Navy. The private and public attacks on him would have shaken any mind not upheld by inward satisfaction at having faithfully performed his duty. But first, he wished to disclaim responsibility for the conduct and event of measures which he was called on to execute. He acted ministerially; the measures were the measures of Administration alone—he was no more than any other of his Majesty's confidential servants. Before they came to him, measures must have his Majesty's approval. Then as to the money. We build larger

[1] *Parliamentary History*, xx. 441–2.

ships now—and there had been two fires in the dockyards—at Portsmouth and Chatham. Then we now keep a much greater provision of stores on hand—enough for two or three years. When he came into office, no timber could be had on any terms; the ships on paper were mostly rotten or unfit for service, having been built with green timber at the end of the late war. This was the effect of the monopoly of the timber merchants, and the great demand for the consumption of the East India Company. He promoted a Bill to restrain the Company from contracting for more than a certain number of tons annually. He contracted for foreign timber, which answered extremely well—and so the monopoly was broken, and now we had more British timber than we wanted, or had room for in the docks. Then he went into numbers of ships—we had 69 or 70 last October, and France at most 58. The noble lord says France now has 81—this is extremely improbable, and I do not suppose he will say, ready for sea. We shall have 96 by the close of the year—within one of the highest year of the late war.

It was impossible to defend every part of dominions so extensive as ours. Every part, however, was protected, except in the Mediterranean. He refused to say we had abandoned the Mediterranean—but would it be prudent to risk a squadron there now? Even British seamen must give way to superiority of numbers. The noble lord said Spain was armed—most powerfully armed. Then would it be prudent to hazard a squadron? If not, it would have been equally dangerous to have sent Byron to America before we knew where d'Estaing was going. He hinted that Keppel was mistaken in thinking himself inferior—but as he imagined he was he acted prudently to return. He had orders to return if he found the French superior. (Sandwich was very careful not to blame Keppel, though he took the opportunity of comparing his conduct with that of Hawke, who disobeyed the other way, and said he did not regard a small superiority.)

As for the number of ships left by Hawke, it was enough to say they only cut a figure on paper. The noble Earl asked where were they? Twenty-one of the line and 60 frigates were broken up; 2 of the line and 56 frigates had been either destroyed or taken in the present war—in the whole, about 140. Towards the end he became jocular—he would not vote for the dismission of John Earl of Sandwich—indeed it would be indecent for him to vote at all, but he begged their lordships to understand that he should be much obliged to such of them as would vote for keeping him in his place. With this broad hint he sat down, and

Bristol repeated his charges. With all these enormous stores, which were to account for the enormous expense, several of Keppel's squadron, while under sailing orders, had their rigging unreaved to equip some of Byron's ships! Richmond said the elements had warred for us—otherwise d'Estaing would have got to the Delaware before Byron, who left nearly a month later—and Lord Howe's fleet and Clinton's army must have been destroyed. He called on Sandwich to "avow, explain, or retract" the words "he was certain that when Mr. Keppel returned from his station off Ushant in June, he was equal to the French force then in Brest." Sandwich did not answer. There was a pause. Richmond repeated his challenge a second and third time. At last Sandwich said he would not answer the question of an individual lord unless it was the desire of the House. Of course, the House, which was about to acquit Sandwich, did not desire it. Richmond next reminded him that he had said, speaking of the 27th of July, "Our fleet being so much more beaten, as I have said before, than that of France." Is not this an express acknowledgment of what France pretends—that our fleet *was* beaten? At last Sandwich was compelled to answer. He wriggled miserably. He did not believe the account of the naval state of France was correct. It was very unfair to catch at his words, and cruel to misinterpret them. He never meant to say, positively, that Mr. Keppel was equal to d'Orvilliers (though he had argued for hours that he was); he only said that "for all that appeared to the contrary, he was," and so he said still. He had reason to believe the French fleet might be more numerous—perhaps twenty-three or twenty-four—but he meant that, considering our superiority in three-deckers, the difference might have been counter-balanced. He never had the least thought of censuring Mr. Keppel directly or indirectly—on the contrary, he thought he had acted very properly, and was ready to declare it. It never entered into his head to say the British fleet was more beaten than the French—he only meant it had suffered greatly—he saw it when it returned to Plymouth. For answer Richmond read out the notes he had taken as Sandwich was speaking, adding that Ministers were not to be trusted even in matters of indifference—much less in those of real importance; and he told the story of how "the Minister in the other House," and a noble viscount in this, though regularly informed of each step in the French Treaty, denied that they had heard or believed a syllable, when asked by an honourable relative of his, and a noble Duke.

At this, Stormont rose, and loudly condemned the indiscretion of mentioning matters of State. He believed newspaper accounts,

and other publication in pamphlets, etc., containing angry and indiscreet expressions respecting the French Court or the French King, had had worse effect than anything else whatever in bringing matters to their present state. He was sorry Spain had been mentioned—the conduct of crowned heads, and the spirit and ability of great nations, are very delicate subjects.

After this Lord Lyttleton made a speech which must have spread dismay through the ministerial camp. He had, he said, a place under Government which Ministers were welcome to, if they thought it a crime in a man to declare his mind. He saw no reason for not mentioning Spain—to temporise was to increase the danger. The Family Compact stared us in the face—the branches of the House of Bourbon were bound by treaty to stand by one another. He was very severe on Sandwich. He repeated Keppel's words about the great struggle in his mind when he found himself obliged to turn his back on the French,—that back which had never been turned before on an enemy! Keppel had said he gave up the pride of his heart to the painful sense of the duty he owed his country. Those Ministers were supremely criminal who drove such an officer from the service. No officer stood higher in the opinion of seamen than Admiral Keppel, and his return, when he discovered the superiority of the French fleet, gained him the greatest honour from his own profession—he was sent out not merely to fight a few ships, but to defend our docks and arsenals—Portsmouth and Plymouth—to defend the City of London, the navigation of the Thames—the seats of their lordships in that very House—in short, to preserve the whole British Empire—for no less would have been the loss if he had been defeated. Either the Ministry who gave the orders, or the Admiral who violated them, was in the wrong. The Admiral had been acquitted by his proper judges, and by the acclamations of the people of England. The First Lord had said we had a fleet superior to the united House of Bourbon. Who could doubt the First Lord of the Admiralty? Much might have been done if Parliament had known the weakness of the country, but that assertion hoodwinked that House—it altered his own opinion immediately—it dissipated his dread of a war with France —it induced him to rise and reply to the late Earl of Chatham, who had said we had not above twenty sail of the line fit for service.

Lyttleton then spoke of the present situation—a double war with France and America, trade decreasing, manufactures perishing, —the First Lord of the Treasury confessing he can only raise seven millions when he wants eight, and that he must bribe the monied men by ruinous bargains to raise the seven. The American war,

however justifiable its principles ("which I think were constitutional"), has been, from the time General Gage was shut up in Boston, down to the surrender at Saratoga, "one black aera"; and so it will be marked to the latest posterity. And now it is said there is good news, because Colonel Campbell is arrived from Georgia with news of a victory—and in the same breath asking for a reinforcement. Good God! let noble lords consider the American business as it really stands: Georgia is ours, Boston was ours, Philadelphia was ours. After five years we have got half a province. And what is our object? No man but Mr. Vyner now thinks we can tax America. It is not supremacy, not legislation—all that was given up by the Commissioners. The Ministry have changed places with Opposition. Lord Chatham's Bill was a Tory measure compared with what the Commissioners offered!

Then Abingdon rose and said that for his part he denied the constitutional right to tax America. The Alpha and Omega of his politics was *Look at Home* (the motto of the Congress paper money)—if we had looked at home this villainy in America would never have been. Gower confessed that Keppel was inferior to d'Orvilliers when he sailed the first time, but it was quite justifiable to send him out to protect the trade fleets. He had no hand in censuring Mr. Keppel—knew nothing till the trial was ordered. He had known the Admiral before ever he went to sea, when they were children together—he was a most able officer, and an honest man. Neither Mr. Keppel nor Lord Howe had been driven from the service—they had reasons for declining to serve—perhaps very good ones. And he was afraid Sir Robert Harland was going to resign too![1]

Shelburne spoke of the total want of discipline in the fleet, and "the absurd and monstrous measures" adopted by Ministers in distributing it. There was a mutiny aboard the three flag-ships in the western squadron last year. Sir Robert Harland was resigning on account of the treatment he received while giving his evidence at the court-martial now sitting (on Palliser); an omen of what he might expect if he went to sea with two[2] of the members of the Court, with whom he must co-operate, and whom he might be called to command. Grafton had a note of the expression which Sandwich had denied. On November 20, 1777, Sandwich said, in reply to Chatham, that no

[1] "If Lord Howe would have come cordially into the Admiralty, it might have been a popular appointment; but as he has added conditions that it would be disgraceful to grant, I am clear Lord Sandwich fills the Admiralty much better than any other man in the kingdom."—Letter of March 1, 1779.

[2] Supposed to be Vice-Admiral Darby and Rear-Admiral Digby.

man was fit to be First Lord of the Admiralty who did not always take care to have a fleet equal to the combined fleets of France and Spain. Lord Coventry said he had heard Sandwich say this very often.

Sandwich does not seem to have replied.

The Lords rejected the motion by 78 to 39. Twenty-five Peers, including every member of the House who had any knowledge of the sea, signed a Protest, and Bristol also drew up a long Protest on his own account.[1]

The very long debates on the Enquiry into the Management of Greenwich Hospital are full of instruction as to the way contracts were given, and allowed to be carried out. They continued through the greater part of the session, and fill a larger space in the *Parliamentary History* than the debates on America. As the Admiralty was the department of State responsible for Greenwich Hospital, these debates were an attack on Sandwich by Opposition and his defence by Ministerialists. Captain Baillie, the Lieutenant-Governor, had exposed many abuses, in particular the frauds of the butcher who had the meat-contract, and supplied meat of bad quality when he was paid for the best.[2] Baillie got this man convicted; but his contract was renewed, and Baillie was dismissed without any compensation and without even a trial. Baillie had written a pamphlet, accompanied by a letter to Sandwich, begging that a full meeting of the Governors might be called by previous notice in the *London Gazette*. A Court was called, but without notice except to particular persons. Thus a packed Court was obtained, which referred the charges made by Captain Baillie to a Committee, on which were the very persons he accused! Baillie

[1] The two Royal Dukes voted against Sandwich. Wraxall describes Sandwich as "tall and strong, with an expressive face, which however looked too convivial, and did not bely him. He was disliked on both public and private grounds. He had great application, and understanding of business. His morals were fitter for the Court of Charles II than that of George III. His fortune was not large enough to preserve him from temptation. He set the whole navy together by the ears, and destroyed all confidence and friendship between superior and inferior. He was accused of sending his favourites to stations where they could make rich captures, and share the proceeds with himself."

[2] He had sold "bull and bull-stag beef at the price of good fat ox-beef." He had also given short weight, and had been detected stealing the meat he had himself supplied. Twenty-five penalties were recovered against this man. Baillie complained again, and convicted him upon his breach of contract, for furnishing bull-beef, and upon the defence recovered only £100, the directors having compromised the affair and let the fellow off, and had renewed the contract!—*See the Duke of Richmond's Speech* on March 11.

attended at that Committee—but as accused—and he was not allowed to go into his own defence. The Chairman told him he should be heard—so then a new Chairman was appointed, who refused to give a promise; and in the end Baillie was turned out to starve without a trial at all, after forty years' service. It is little wonder that men like Howe and Keppel refused to serve under Sandwich. Baillie was offered £600 a year if he would stop further proceedings, and take no notice of the report, so that it might not come before Parliament. Baillie refused, and in spite of Sandwich's efforts to silence enquiry, Richmond gained his point; witnesses were examined. As is usually the case, the gross waste of the contracts was matched by the most petty meanness. Thus, the sheets were made a quarter of a yard too short; the shirts were docked in like manner, contrary to the regulations; the shoes were bad; the stockings were so bad that one-third were returned to the contractor, and a shilling a dozen was deducted on those which were kept—because there was no time to get better. The washing was badly done—the linen not washed clean. The beer was watered—the Council had found it not fit for the pensioners to drink. The posts and rails of the blind men's walk having been taken down, were not replaced. The Chaplain had bought his office. Intimidation was used to prevent persons complaining to Captain Baillie—some officers had been told by this Chaplain that there should be an end to their preferment if they were seen in company with Baillie. Then there was the contract for the Painted Hall—£1000 was paid for this to a private contractor, and Mr. Bertels, "an eminent picture cleaner," would have done it for £400, had it been advertised.

Then came the greater abuses—the introduction of landsmen, contrary to the intention of the foundation, and the misconduct of the several boards, especially of the Board of Directors, in renewing the contract with Mellish, although "he was on record for cheating the hospital." They excused themselves by saying his contract was the lowest![1]

Richmond's motion was rejected by 67 to 25. He immediately walked out, followed by the rest of the minority. After which the

[1] In defending Mellish, Mansfield said the contract "was to furnish the very best ox, or bullock-beef, which, in a strict view, was almost impossible, in the opinion of those who were to use it; because the difference between the very best, and a degree somewhat inferior, or middling, was . . . beyond the cognisance of the conscience of a jury." Persons might think it to be bull, when it was really ox, and perhaps good ox-beef. Mansfield concluded with an eulogium on the virtues and abilities of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

majority passed three counter motions: That no enquiry was needed; That Baillie had brought a groundless and malicious charge; and That the revenues of the Hospital had increased during the time the Earl of Sandwich had been First Lord of the Admiralty.

CHAPTER LXXIX

THE PENAL LAWS

"To have our table loaded with petitions to do wrong to any one subject, without any application on his part to be screened from it and protected in his rights, is a situation of things so unusual and so unnatural,—implying so much guilt or so much folly,—that it cannot fail of producing the very worst effects. It is that way of skulking, to which, under the idea of a prudent caution, the Roman Catholics have been advised at other times, that has tended in a very great degree to bring that odium upon them, which men who conceal their faces, and are supposed to entertain secret and concealed designs, are always sure to excite; men who hold no other opinions than what were a while ago held by the whole world, and which are now held by great nations . . . are treated as if they were a new and obscure sect of fanatics, who entertained principles which they did not avow, and were thereby growing into a conspiracy dangerous to all government. I have long had an opportunity of observing the mischief of this ridiculous wisdom of theirs; or, rather, which is infused into them by those who advise them, not for their benefit, but for the ease and convenience of the advisers."—*Edmund Burke to the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas* (Loughborough), June 15, 1780.

THE Almanack Bill—to vest the sole right of printing Almanacks in the Two Universities—was remarkable for the great speech of Mr. Erskine, which caused its rejection. Thus while so much was being lost, a little was sometimes gained.

Among the gains were the attempts at repealing some of the penal laws. There were several of such attempts this session, beginning with Sir Henry Hoghton's motion (March 10) to grant further relief to Protestant Dissenters, by ceasing to require them to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles—or rather, as Wilkes said, the Thirty-five and a half.[1] Of course those who opposed the relief expatiated on their extreme love of toleration, and abhorrence of persecution—but it is not persecution to discourage errors in religion. Some declared that the whole constitution of Church and

[1] They were allowed to except the XXXIV, XXXV, XXXVI, and part of the XX. From an incidental reference in this debate we learn that last 30th of January not one member of the Commons attended the Speaker to St. Margaret's, nor did a single lord attend the Chancellor.

State would be altered, if Dissenters did not continue to sign thirty-five and a half Articles of the Church of England. Above all, they wanted to wait—the times were so disturbed—the least thing may create tumult—nothing is wanting to the present situation but a religious controversy. The Dissenters are not actually persecuted, and they have not even petitioned, and the University of Oxford has petitioned—against them. We refused to exempt them from subscription when they came forward and said they were Christians; now they will not give any pledge to believe anything. The other side replied that toleration never causes tumult—in which they were unfortunately greatly mistaken. The motion passed almost unanimously, and the numbers in the divisions on these questions show that Ministers left Opposition pretty much to themselves, and did not trouble to fight in the good old cause of religious intolerance.

But the really dangerous point was touched when the disabilities of Catholics were considered. After the abominable doings in Edinburgh, the Catholics of Scotland petitioned the House of Commons. The Petition was a most temperate, even submissive statement of their grievances—it recapitulated their inoffensive and dutiful conduct, through a long series of years, their readiness to embrace every opportunity of serving their country with their lives and fortunes, and their hopes that when the penal laws were relaxed against their fellow-subjects, the Catholics of England, the same indulgence would be shown to themselves; they had consented to have their relief postponed in that hope. But this humility and duty, instead of reconciling opinion, was made use of to exasperate the lower people to violence; the public papers were filled with inflammatory advertisements, pamphlets were dispersed representing Papists as enemies to society, almost unworthy to be allowed to exist; invitations were sent through all Scotland, encouraging the people to oppose all attempts to allow Catholics the smallest part of the rights of subjects; and in answer to this the newspapers were full of resolutions of boroughs, corporations, societies, etc., strenuously to oppose any attempt of Parliament to do anything in their favour; so that they had given up every thought of applying to Parliament while that ferment lasted, rather than endanger the peace of their country. But the more submissive they were, the more furious seemed the people, until their houses were plundered and burned, and their lives threatened.

By the severity of the laws against them they are in a great measure precluded from all legal redress—inferior courts have it

not in their power to help them; they therefore apply to Parliament to protect them. They entertain no resentment against anyone in particular—wish no one to be called to account, much less punished—they forgive from the bottom of their hearts, being enjoined to do so by their religion. But when all the rest of his Majesty's subjects are relieved, they cannot help thinking it very hard that they are not. At the same time, aware that, with the present flame which is raised against them, it might disturb the peace of the country to insist upon it, they do not now ask it, while protesting that nothing in their opinion or actions has deserved laws of such extreme rigour as those to which they submit. And though they refrain from asking relief, they do demand protection, and as several of them are utterly ruined, they ask for compensation. If the laws had been put in execution against them, and they had been legally tried and condemned for serving God as their conscience dictates, they would have submitted, from the profound respect they bore to the laws of their country; but they think it hard to be exposed to the fury of a lawless multitude. They ask that those who are utterly unable to bear the losses they have sustained, may be compensated, and that all may be protected. They also mention that those who have persecuted them are calling for the strict enforcement of the most sanguinary laws against them, and are denying the authority of Parliament to repeal those laws, or any other laws made before the Union; and are threatening the magistrates with the same violence if they do not execute the laws, "representing those means of banishing and putting to death your petitioners, as their rights and privileges, and proposing associations against buying and selling, borrowing or lending, or having any of the ordinary intercourse of society with those of our religion, and threatening to proceed against all who shall refuse to join them in those measures, as if they were Papists." And in their late violent attempts against some of the most respectable characters of the Established Church of Scotland, they have shown what they are capable of doing.

It is perhaps better to abstain from comment on a document whose truth was to be justified by fire and flame in little more than a year. It is only one of a thousand documents—most of them written not by Catholics but by Protestants—which ought to have prevented Englishmen from ever talking as though the Protestant religion necessarily means religious liberty. It is very doubtful whether, if the whole account was made up, Ireland might not balance Spain; and whether the slow, steady, remorseless drawing, hanging, and quartering of men for the sole crime of

being Catholic priests, might not even balance the dragonnades.

When the petition was read, Burke rose to move for a Committee, and exposed the supineness of Government in permitting this violence in Scotland. He hoped the Government was not dead, but only asleep. Here he looked across at North, who was asleep, and said, "Brother Lazarus is not dead, but sleepeth." The House laughed immoderately, and North laughed too. Fox said it became the honour and humanity, as well as the dignity of Parliament, to repeal the penal laws of Scotland, and not "be deterred by little insurrections in a small corner of their empire" from doing an act of common justice. North—now awake—said he thought compensation should be made, would be ready to support such a measure if he did not think voluntary compensation infinitely more eligible than compulsory. He had been told the Magistrates were going to give compensation, and he thought it better to wait.

So the Petition was ordered to lie upon the table.

CHAPTER LXXX

THE ENQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR

"In my conscience, I believe, there never was less plundering, nor fewer enormities committed by any army, in the field, and where the inhabitants were in arms against the troops, than by that army which I had the honour to command. . . . I declare that I do not recollect to have ever heard of more than one rape imputed to the soldiery, and that in the province of New York. The criminal was secured . . . but the accuser refused to prosecute."—*Narrative of Sir W. Howe.*

EVEN the wickedness and folly of the American War is less bad reading than this attempt of Protestant Christians to light up the fire of persecution when it was ready to die out. But before America came on again, there was a very angry debate on the Palliser court-martial[1]—Mulgrave making a furious speech against the "Machiavellian arts" of Opposition. "Divisions in the navy! Discontents! Mutinies! It was false, it was wicked! Discontents and disunion existed only in their minds—they tried to create them, they laboured to sow dissention." He went on in this strain till the Speaker called him to order. Burke hinted at the dissensions in the Cabinet—an open secret, one party being for and another against reconciliation with America.

Next, the distressed state of Ireland was the subject of a long speech by Rockingham in the Lords—the debt accumulating every year; in 1777 a deficit of £260,000. As long as England was prosperous, Ireland had recourse to her, but now, last spring (1778), "although the revenues of Ireland were hawked about London streets, and offered to be mortgaged for the sum of £300,000, a single shilling could not be procured or borrowed upon them." Then a dreary list of figures and averages, comparisons of exports and imports—poor Ireland always able to take less and less, until for the last eleven years the balance is above a million and a half in favour of Scotland, and above five millions in favour of England. Last year, the export to Ireland decreased one-

[1] Palliser had been received by the King since his acquittal—if it was an acquittal, which Keppel said he had been unable to learn.

fourth. Rockingham spoke of that West Riding which he knew —woollen manufactures were growing less; and a manufacturer who went to Dublin every year to take orders, had told him that his correspondent there had written to him not to come or send, for he could not ensure the safety of his property or his person. This year, in Committee of Supply, we are paying £64,000 for the six Irish foot-regiments, and one of dragoons, serving in America —Ireland cannot pay, so we must. Then the petitions, and the associations, not to import, or use, or buy our manufactures. On every principle of gratitude and interest Ireland must have relief. If we drive the people to extremities, they may resist—as an act of despair! He even said that Ireland's situation would justify resistance—all care and protection having been withdrawn. The population, by the most accurate computation, was about 2,300,000 souls, of whom 500,000 "were believed to be Protestants—200,000 of the Established Church, and 300,000 Dissenters"; and all ranks, qualities, and religions are united as one man, forgetting all animosities in the ruin which threatens them—all agreed not to buy English manufactures. He advised Government to commission the people to take arms. What if Ireland were invaded? He reminded them of all they owed to Ireland—trade and commerce, an accession of strength in war, *the immense sums she sent to her absentees, and paid to officers and pensioners*. Of how "in King William's time," the Parliament of Ireland consented to prohibit the export of their own woollens to give England a preference. We repaid Ireland by laying duties or granting bounties to British linens, equal to a prohibition of the Irish—while we gave every encouragement to Scotland. He moved for a redress of grievances, and an Address to his Majesty that he would be graciously pleased to consider the matter, and direct his Ministers to lay particulars before Parliament as to the trade and manufactures of Ireland.

On June 2 Shelburne told the Lords that the American war had begun upon less provocation than this country had given to Ireland. The time from the remonstrances of America to her declaration of independency was only eleven months. The language of Ireland at present was much higher than that of America at the time he mentioned. Was it wise to let Ireland remain in discontent seven months longer? (For the matter was to wait over the adjournment.) Was it not known that Spain had given up her mediation? He believed Spain had said explicitly: "We wish for peace, but you must either make peace, or we shall be obliged to take part in the war against

you." It was of no use. Ministers still said that to hurry was to censure them—the enquiry was vast—it must take time, and perhaps, in trying to prevent a rebellion in Ireland, we may cause a rebellion in England! But the Lords rejected the motion for an Address to the King.

The Enquiry into the Conduct of the War began on April 22, and continued at intervals till June 29. On the first day, Sir William Howe addressed the House (gone into Committee) in his own defence. He set himself to prove: 1. That he did not neglect to furnish the American Secretary with information; 2. That he gave his opinions as to what was practicable; 3. That he carried out his own plans; 4. That he never flattered Ministers with hopes of ending the war in any one campaign with the force at his command.

From the light thrown behind the scenes by Sir William Howe, it becomes clear that the first aim of Administration was to conceal from the nation the real cost and difficulties of the war, and only their second aim was to "reduce" America.

The first part of Sir William's speech was a justification for not trying to carry the American lines at Brooklyn, on the 27th of August, 1776. It proves that he did not consider Washington's dispositions by any means contemptible. He says it would have cost 1000, or perhaps 1500, British troops to carry the lines, and the rebels would still have secured their retreat. But the interest concentrates on the campaigns of 1777.

A month before Trenton,[1] Howe wrote to Germaine that his army ought to be 35,000, to oppose the 50,000 voted by Congress, and the large bodies of Provincial Militia. He submitted two plans. In the first, 10,000 men were to act on the Rhode Island side, a part of them to penetrate eastward towards Boston; another 10,000 in New York province, to move up the river to Albany; 5000 more were to hold New York Island, and 8000 to cover New Jersey and hold Washington in check. He hoped in autumn to attack Philadelphia and Virginia. But for all this he must have ten ships of the line, and a reinforcement of 15,000 men, and another battery of artillery. In this suggestion of a move to Albany we see the sole ground of the unhappy Burgoyne's expectation

[1] "My separate letter of the 30th Nov. 1776 . . ." reached Germaine on December 30. The answer, dated January 14, 1778, reached Howe on March 9.

that Howe was marching to meet him. Howe's alternative plan was based on information—"which I thought might be depended on"—that Pennsylvania might be reduced, even if his force were no more than 19,000. It was contained in his "separate letter" of December 20, and when he received Germaine's answer to his letter of November 30, he concluded this latter plan was to be adopted, for Germaine could only promise 7800 men and Howe had expressly said that the advance towards Boston must be deferred till the reinforcements came. He had begged Germaine to point out any general plans that might be thought advisable, and to let him know when he might expect the reinforcements. This letter was received in England on February 23, "long before General Burgoyne's departure." Other letters passed—Howe pressing for more men—15,000 at least, and ought to be 20,000, and speaking of Philadelphia as his object. This letter also arrived before Burgoyne's departure—both letters were answered on March 3, 1777, the answer brought out by Major Balfour, who reached New York on May 8. Howe now had Germaine's approbation of his second plan—Germaine called his reasons for abandoning the first "solid and decisive." He was sorry he could not send even the 7800—Howe must only expect 2900. At the same time he suggested "a warm diversion" on the coasts of Massachusetts and New Hampshire! The General and Admiral consulted together, and Lord Howe resolved not to attempt it.

Sir William now wrote another "secret letter" (April 2) informing Germaine that the principal part of the first plan could no longer be thought of—the Jerseys must be abandoned, and Pennsylvania invaded only by sea; with the disappointment of his hopes of reinforcement, his hopes of ending the war that year had vanished. Germaine's reply was dated May 18. It approved the expedition to Pennsylvania, but seemed to hint that as Howe had said his force was adequate last year, it ought to be so now. Yet would not any man, "less acquainted than his lordship with military reasoning," have seen that the force which was sufficient to take New York, and other strongholds, must be partly used up in holding them? The more we possessed the more we had to guard, and the larger was the force required. The letter was full of what Howe boldly calls "delusive hopes, built upon a supposition of the enemy's weakness." Germaine hears the rebels cannot raise an army to face his Majesty's

troops—he has no doubt the loyalists of Pennsylvania will raise a force sufficient to defend that province—and so on.

Meanwhile, on April 2, Howe had sent Germaine the copy of a letter he was on the point of sending to General Carleton in Canada—to the effect that he would probably be in Pennsylvania by the time the Northern army reached the borders of New York State, and that "little assistance must be expected" from himself, as he probably would NOT be able to detach a corps "to act up Hudson's river." On the 5th of June he received a copy of Germaine's letter to Carleton, of March 26, in which the American Secretary gave Carleton the plan for the northern expedition, and added that he would "write to Sir William Howe by the first packet." There were no instructions whatever with this copy, and the letter intended to be sent never came.

Speaking of his critics, Howe said that persons of some authority had asked why he did not go into New England, or up Hudson's river, instead of to Philadelphia. "Would this have led to the conclusion of the war? I think not, for, Sir, wherever the main body of our army had gone, there most assuredly would General Washington have gone also."[1] And he would have avoided a general action. And the militia of New England are "the most persevering in all North America," and would have rallied most speedily to Washington. Whereas in Pennsylvania, Washington was obliged to risk a battle to save the capital. Howe added, that in forcing a battle he was himself careful to choose the least hazardous circumstances, "for even a victory, attended by a heavy loss of men, on our part, *might have given a fatal check to the progress of the war, and might have proved irreparable.*"

He went to Philadelphia by sea, because he was sure that Washington would follow him by land. He considered his southern expedition would prove the best diversion for the Northern army. He expected to hold three provinces by the end of the year. Before he started, he had heard of Burgoyne's successes. He left orders with Clinton to create such diversions in his favour as circumstances might permit, and said that in the unlikely event of Washington going northward he would follow him. When his fleet arrived off the Delaware, he found several days must be spent in getting up the river, so that he could not hope to reach Wilmington before Washington was there in force—the river had been blocked and

[1] There are many of these unintentional tributes to Washington.

defended; the attempt to go up would have been very hazardous and the country was very marshy and bad to march through. He therefore went round by Chesapeak Bay—a plan already thought of. On August 16, the day he entered the Bay, he received a letter from Germaine to tell him his plan was approved, but Germaine hoped "whatever he may meditate, it will be executed in time for him to co-operate with the northern army." This was now impossible—he could not now turn back.

All through his defence there runs the idea that he did not dare risk any serious loss of men, knowing he could not replace them. On this account he did not attack Washington at Valley Forge. "I continued my remonstrance for more troops. Perhaps it was impossible for the minister to send me more—such an acknowledgment would have been no reflection upon himself, and would have relieved my mind from the uneasiness of thinking he supposed I did not require them." He saw he had lost the confidence of those who were to judge his conduct, and he asked permission to resign.

The enquiry was adjourned for a month, and then Earl Nugent made an attempt to stop it—above all, he was against calling evidence. He saw no necessity for any enquiry at all—the hon. general and the noble lord were not accused—the papers on the table contained the fullest approbation of their conduct. They had been received by their Sovereign. It was said, indeed, that some runners and whisperers, and coffee-house politicians, had traduced them in pamphlets and newspapers, but that was no reason for enquiring into the conduct of a Minister or Commander—no one escaped in these times, such was the licentiousness of the Press. Supposing that we go into this, and the House thinks there ought to be a court-martial on General Burgoyne? We could not have it, because he is a prisoner on parole, not amenable to any jurisdiction in this country—if he were found guilty, that gallant but unfortunate officer could not be punished. There was a little disorder as Nugent spoke of Burgoyne, and still more when he went on to say that the obstinate refusal of the House to redress the grievances of Ireland were paving the way for a French invasion of that country. North, not daring to vote against enquiry, opposed the examination of Cornwallis—he too protested there was no charge and no accuser—he was perfectly satisfied with the General's conduct,—

though he would not pass an opinion on his military conduct,—he was sure he had done his duty. He was very much against examining inferior officers as to the conduct of their superior (an objection he seems not to have felt when Admiral Keppel was to be tried). The General's defence was very able; he wants to go on, but what is the good? The people outside won't be convinced, even if we acquit him. We shall all think the same as before. *Is the conduct of Ministers the latent object?* Are *we* really being tried "by a side-wind"? If so, let the accuser stand forth and make his charge. The noble lord near me is more immediately concerned than myself, as to what happened in his department; but Ministers are all equally responsible.

The Chairman put the question, that Lord Cornwallis be called. The House was hesitating, when Burgoyne rose and begged the House to give him an opportunity of proving his own innocence. If the other commanders stood justified in the opinion of Ministers and that House, he did not. He was in a very different position, and was astonished to hear the noble lord (Nugent) trying to stop enquiry—he usually possessed an uncommon degree of candour. If so many officers have quitted the service from factious or private motives, they are worse than "the agitators of Cromwell." But if they have retired because this House is told that an officer has all he requires, when only a third, or two-thirds, have been given him; if another is made responsible for blame because he drew his own plans—though the Minister knows this to be false—then officers are not only justified, but called on by their duty to their country to demand an enquiry. Why was he forbidden the Court? Every captain who loses a king's ship in fight or by wreck is tried by court-martial, but was it ever heard he was forbid the Court? There is Captain Windsor, returned from France on parole—he is received at Court. Germaine denied that he had prevented the King from receiving Burgoyne. And the captive army was not neglected—he hoped it was even now at liberty. He had heard from General Clinton that all honest Americans looked on the violation of the Convention as a shameful breach of public faith. Burgoyne was ordered to return that he might make the captivity of the army easier to them. Germaine was ready to show his papers, but could not see the use of the enquiry, unless it was to decide whether the plans of Ministers had been "founded in weakness or wisdom."

Lord Howe said the accusations against him and his brother were not confined to coffee-house runners. Persons in high credit with Ministers had written pamphlets—several members of that House. One in particular (Johnstone) had made the most specific charges. After a long wrangle, Fox said this was the issue, the Commanders have done their duty; they want to prove it. Ministers are conscious of their incapacity and guilt; they attempt to evade it. Without a division the House refused to examine Cornwallis.

On May 3 Barré again moved that Cornwallis be heard, and again Ministers rallied all their forces to prevent it. In his desperation North declared that no specific charges had been made—"not a single charge." "Tommy" Townshend asked if the noble lord had been asleep when the most direct charges were made against the General and Admiral—for returning to New York, and letting d'Estaing escape—for going south instead of north—for retreating from the Jerseys—for going to Philadelphia by sea? Fox said "the noble lord deceived the House," for he told them he had every prospect of a successful campaign, when he had a letter in his pocket from the General telling him that "no successful campaign, nor an end to the war, could be expected," unless very considerable reinforcements were sent out.

Burgoyne now insisted on stating his own case. The American Secretary planned an expedition to co-operate with the grand army under Sir William Howe. He was asked for a plan of his own share of it—he gave one. Germaine struck out the discretionary power he had reserved, "*to act as times and circumstances might require*," and considerably reduced the force he had asked for—he never had more than two-thirds of what was promised him, and he was peremptorily ordered to force his way to Albany. He acted under these orders, and was at last compelled to surrender at Saratoga. And now the noble lord says his orders were not peremptory, and his force was adequate, and his failure was his own fault! He was accused of losing an army. He demanded justice. The blame must lie somewhere. If he acted under peremptory orders, and the plan was impracticable for want of the co-operation of the Commander-in-Chief, the blame would rest with the American Secretary.

Germaine denied he had ever accused Burgoyne for the failure of the expedition. An hon. gentleman (Fox) said he had deceived the House by promising a successful issue.

General Howe had given him great hopes before the surprise of Trenton. After the affair at White Plains, when the rebel army "was all one as annihilated,"[1] the General asked for 20,000 men, but with an enemy flying on every side he had thought such a requisition ought not to be complied with—and to show the "low, desperate state of the rebels it was well known that they secretly sent a deputation of three persons to the General, to inform him they had consulted the Congress, who had consented to permit them to receive the King's troops into Philadelphia." On this story he seems to have founded his hopes of a speedy conquest. "But all our hopes were blasted by that unhappy affair at Trenton—that event began what the surrender at Saratoga completed." As for the southern expedition, he did not understand it at the time, nor did he now. He could not even guess at the General's motives for it—"Nay, when asked where the General was, or what he was doing, he said, he knew no more of either than any person in the street." He hoped the hon. general would not be surprised at that expression, he had not received a line from him for two months and six days—from August 22 till October 28. And as no charge had been made against the Commander-in-Chief, and the noble lord the Vice-Admiral, and as the hon. general who commanded the northern expedition was amenable to no judicature in this country, he should vote against resuming the enquiry.

Sir William Howe then stated an astonishing fact—astonishing as showing what sort of information Ministers accepted. "The pretended invitation from the inhabitants of Philadelphia had been fabricated by himself, in order to deceive the enemy. He forged the invitation, and sent a person with it, that the contents might fall into the hands of the rebels, in order to deceive General Washington, and alarm him for his own safety, on account of traitors within, and a powerful army without."

[1] "Matter of Fact," addressed to Germaine, condemns every part of Howe's conduct—at Long Island he let the rebels escape—also from New York—also from White Plains. Then he allowed Washington to escape through the Jerseys, "when he had not above 25 hundred poor, dispirited, naked fugitives to attend him. At no time during the winter was the rebel army above five thousand strong, often not three, and those in want of almost every article of cloathing. Yet with that inferior, naked force, Mr. Washington blockaded our army in their winter quarters, and remained the whole winter in unmolested possession of every town within ten miles of them."—Given in *A View of the Evidence*," etc.

We are not told how this bombshell was received by Germaine. But after a few feeble remarks on the "inquisitorial powers" undoubtedly vested in the House, but never used except as a censure on Administration, Rigby rose, "in great heat," and made a direct personal attack on Burgoyne, which rendered it impossible to refuse enquiry. Why did the hon. general complain of cruelty? Had he not lost one of the best disciplined and appointed armies ever sent from this country? Had he not, by his rashness and imprudence, led them into insurmountable difficulties? Had he not led them into ignominious captivity, ordering them to pile arms in the face of a despicable enemy — an undisciplined militia? A rebel militia! The hon. general pretended to lament the fate of the unhappy sharers of his misfortunes—of which he had been the cause—but how did he show his feelings? Had he not left them to their fate, to the resentment of a perfidious and implacable enemy? Why did he not, like a man and a soldier, share their fate? While they were insulted, and suffering every species of indignity, was not he enjoying himself in all the amusements of the first metropolis on the globe? Conscious of present impunity, was he not day after day trying to clog the wheels of Government by false representations—trying to throw on Ministers the blame he deserved himself?

Having thus tried to demolish the unfortunate Burgoyne, Rigby declared himself in favour of enquiry. The American Secretary had now made specific charges against the Commander-in-Chief, and avowed that he had withdrawn his confidence on account of the movement to the southward, and going by the Chesapeak, and not writing for two months and six days. After this, it would indeed be cruelty and injustice not to hear the General in his own defence, and he should vote for calling in Lord Cornwallis. After an indignant reply from Burgoyne, North tried to speak—but the House would not hear him, "though he rose five or six times," and Barré's motion was carried without a division.

On the 6th Cornwallis, General Grey, Sir Andrew Hammond, and other officers were examined at the Bar. The facts established were: That the force sent was never adequate; That this was partly due to the general enmity and hostility of the people, "who were almost unanimous in their aversion to the government of Great Britain," but also to the nature of the country—"the most difficult that could possibly be conceived"; That these circumstances of country and people rendered it extremely difficult and

sometimes impossible to reconnoitre, or to obtain intelligence, provisions, or forage; That this, again, made it impossible for the army to carry on its operations at any distance from the fleet, or at least without full possession, on both sides, of some navigable river; and That the army was much retarded, and frequently endangered, by being generally obliged to march in a single column.

Cornwallis[1] began by declaring his great regard and veneration for Sir William Howe. "I think he has deserved greatly of his country." He begged the House to note that he came there to state matters of fact—not opinions. The country was so favourable to ambuscades, that reconnoitring could afford but an imperfect knowledge. They were much embarrassed by the difficulty of getting provisions. Some questions he could not answer, "from political motives." It was he who suggested taking post at Trenton—"I think myself bound to answer for it." For ten days at least, three or four hundred inhabitants of the Jerseys took the oaths every day. "Human prudence could not foresee the surrender of Colonel Rhall's brigade." There were solid reasons against going to Philadelphia through the Jerseys. Whether that expedition was a powerful diversion in favour of the northern army of Burgoyne *is matter of opinion.*

Donop wished for a separate command—thought he was not sufficiently considered—desired Cornwallis to represent this to General Howe. In consequence Donop was sent to Red Bank. He told Donop that Howe did not wish him to sacrifice the troops,—if Redbank could not be easily carried he was to send for reinforcements. He would not answer as to whether the Hessians refused to charge at White Plains; but praised them. Major-General Grey ("No-flint" Grey) spoke of the enmity of the Americans—"they deserted the country wherever we came, and no intelligence could be relied upon." The country was very difficult. "No improper lenity was shown." To have laid waste the country would have been very inconvenient if we had had to revisit the same parts. The enemy were so strongly posted, by nature and art, at Valley Forge, that to attack them would have been unjustifiable. There are no hopes of conquering America with the present force there—"even with a superior army it would be very uncertain." No more lenity was shown

[1] "He was called in, and was indulged with an armed chair within the bar; he was placed between the bar and the table; he sat two or three minutes with his hat on; but when the examination began, he rose, and gave his answers uncovered."—*View of the Whole of the Evidence*, etc.

than to a foreign enemy. "Severity would not now signify." "You can never determine the war now by depopulating the country; they would not suffer you to do it; it would be a very bad way of doing it." "A defeat of the Americans can hardly be decisive; the country renders a retreat in general so very secure."

The evidence had been very damaging to Administration. It had proved that they had long been warned how things were going, and in particular had been informed of the almost universal disaffection—shown by the difficulty of procuring trustworthy intelligence. It had also been shown that from the first resistance had been far more formidable than Ministers had represented; and that even if Sir William Howe had gone up the North River—followed as he would inevitably have been by Washington—the result would probably have been a disaster.

To do something to remove this impression, Ministers suddenly announced their intention to call witnesses of their own. On May 13 De Grey moved for the attendance of Major-General Robertson. This almost amounted to springing new accusations on the Commanders, and it led to much debate that day, and on the 18th—when the House became very angry. After Eden and Johnstone had spoken, Nugent rose to condemn the whole enquiry, "from the beginning to the end," and moved that the Chairman do leave the chair. Burgoyne demanded to be heard in his own defence; on which Rigby "got up in great heat," repeated all his former insults, and said that Phillips had offered to fight his way back to Ticonderoga with a part of the army. Burgoyne said Rigby had now "boldly asserted false charges," and "reasoned upon them." The British troops at Saratoga were "less than 2000, and those exhausted and sunk to the lowest ebb of bodily strength" by "seven days and nights fighting, marching in the most severe weather, watching, famishing, without an hour's repose but with arms in their hands, and then exposed to the enemy's fire in every spot of ground they possessed." And Phillips' offer ("a most generous one, like all his other actions") was, "with a single guide, to attempt an escape to Ticonderoga, in order to put himself at the head of the garrison there to defend the place." Another falsehood was the state of Mr. Gates' army. It was four times his own, "and they were disciplined, steady soldiers." Eden said all the witnesses yet examined concurred that the war in America was impracticable, and a great majority of the people were averse to a British government. And now there was a proposal to stop the enquiry! It was agreed to examine other witnesses.

Burgoyne's witnesses[1] proved conclusively that his own officers did not blame him—a fact which speaks volumes, when one considers the humiliation he had involuntarily brought upon them. But the essential points were left undecided—the nature of his orders, whether he had the option of turning back when it began to grow dangerous to go on; or whether, believing that Howe was marching to meet him, he was bound to go on at all risks. Nor was any attempt made to prove that Howe ever received the counterpart to Burgoyne's orders, or was ever explicitly ordered to co-operate with him by marching on Albany, until he was at the mouth of the Chesapeak—and even then his orders supposed that he would first take Philadelphia.

On June 8 Lord George Germaine "rose to open the evidence in favour of Administration." His object was not to accuse any gentleman, but to defend Ministers and himself. "The evidence of General Grey, if not overturned, would certainly bear hard against Administration"—but that General had only been one year and five months in America, and had only seen the country between the Head of Elk and Philadelphia, and however high he stood in his profession—"and no officer stood higher"—he had formed "a very light and hasty judgment of the people."

Administration had got together ten witnesses, but only two of them were ever examined. The first was Major-General Robertson, now Deputy-Governor of New York. Germaine examined him himself.

In his eagerness to exonerate Ministers by throwing all the blame on the Commanders, Robertson proved too much. He had resided in America twenty-four years, "and knew the dispositions of the people." Independence was never thought of before the rebellion commenced—"only one man on the whole continent wanted it." Full two-thirds of the people were well-affected, and *the loyal Provincials now in arms were equal, if not superior in numbers to the rebels.* The force sent from England was quite

[1] His witnesses were examined on May 20. They were Sir Guy Carleton, Captain Money (acting Quartermaster-General to Burgoyne), Captain Bloomfield (of his artillery), Lieut.-Colonel Kingston (his Adjutant-General), the Earl of Harrington and Major Forbes. Lord Balcarres was also examined. Burgoyne, in a long speech on May 20, repeated that his instructions before Bennington were not observed. "I touch with tenderness, and with great reluctance, points that relate to the dead." Carleton's evidence was so guarded that it proved nothing. The evidence of Burgoyne's officers chiefly established the desperate position of his army. The little evidence given as to Lord Howe's operations in covering the army, and conveying it to Pennsylvania, elicited nothing to his disadvantage.

sufficient, particularly for 1776 and following years. Thought the rebel army never exceeded 16,000 men in 1777. The royal army, including Germans and Provincials, was 40,870 effective men in 1777. The country was *not* remarkably strong or difficult—there were woods here and there. The last sentence is flatly contradicted by almost every despatch of every British commander on land during the war.

Cross-examined as to why, if this were so, we had not reduced America, he said that the two-thirds well-affected were not a match for the other third, in arms and in possession of the government. In the Jerseys, in 1776, no steps were taken to disarm the disaffected or arm the well-affected. And "there was much plundering, *which lost us friends, and gained us enemies.*" Asked if he had ever said that *a grain of prudence* in the King's councils would have prevented the rebellion, he quibbled—a military man is not a proper judge of the King's councils. "Did you ever use such language?" "*I hope not; if I did, I did very wrong.*" Pressed, he said his words might not have been discreet on all occasions; "if they were not, *I don't come here to confess it.*" *He did not suppose the loyal Americans in arms were equal to restoring legal government in America, without our aid.* Lee told him half the rebel army were from Ireland.

He was pressed very hard in cross-examination by Sir W. Howe, Burke, Barré, Sir George Yonge, and other members, and took refuge in evasive answers.

The next witness for Ministers was the renegade Joseph Galloway, now a pensioner of the Treasury. He far outdid Robertson. According to him "not a fifth part of the Americans from choice have supported the present rebellion." "More than four-fifths of the Americans would prefer an union with Great Britain to independence." They would be "distressed if they thought we believed them hostile." He described the panic in the autumn of 1776. When Washington crossed the Delaware, he had not more than 3300 men. "They were panic-struck, and deserted in great numbers." Trenton removed the panic; but at Morristown Washington had not 6000 men. Congress voted 66,000, but did not get 16,000. "By account kept, 2300 deserters came in to our army at Philadelphia—half were Irish, scarce a fourth Americans, the rest English or Scotch." In 1778 Pennsylvania would not supply the rebel army—Washington's supplies were brought in great part from Virginia and South Carolina. Galloway sent out many spies. "The intelligence must have been good, whilst Washington complained of want of intelligence, and said

he was in an enemy's country." He "wanted flour, bread, grain, and forage. He issued a Proclamation—it was not obeyed. He sent and took the grain without paying for it." The people broke their wheels and disabled their waggons. Washington's army was very sickly—the principal physician told Galloway it was for want of salt and clothing. There was "a general inclination in the Middle Colonies, in the spring of 1778, to give up their new rulers and unite with this country." He would not say that he told Howe this—but he told Clinton. The evacuation of Philadelphia caused great dismay. *Howe advised the Magistrates to make their peace with Congress.*

Cross-examined, it appeared that his memory was not so good as to what he had done as a member of Congress. He was always against violent measures. Of the ten resolutions considered by Congress as their Bill of Rights, he opposed the 1st and 4th; the 2nd and 3rd he did not recollect. "The 5th and 6th I did not; the 7th I do not recollect; the 8th I must have opposed." Believed he opposed the 9th—he did not approve of it. Did not recollect the 10th. His life had been attainted "by the rebel States," and his estate, "not short of £40,000 sterling," confiscated. "I receive a very small pittance from Government compared with what I have sacrificed."

In the Jerseys "many, by far too many, were plundered by the British and Hessian troops, while they had in their custody written protections. Friends to government and the disaffected often shared the same fate." People came to him in tears, complaining that they had been plundered of everything, even to the pot to boil their victuals.

It came out that Sir W. Howe had paid Galloway £200 a year at first. Afterwards, in Philadelphia, he had a post worth £650 a year.

On the 24th North gave notice that he would move an adjournment to the 29th. Sir William Howe thereupon claimed a day to call witnesses to rebut Galloway's evidence.[1] Lord Howe charged Galloway with divulging a matter he had confided to him. Opposition mercilessly pointed out that Robertson and Galloway both testified chiefly from hearsay—Robertson had hardly been out of garrison since the war began. Barré

[1] Galloway declared the Americans had lost 40,000 men, by battle, prisoners, and deaths in hospital. A note to the *Enquiry* says they lost 100,000, "reckoned a fifth of the able-bodied whites in America." This would make out that the whole of the one-fifth given by Galloway as the number of rebels had perished!

said the best thing his hon. friend could do was to trouble himself no more about the enquiry—for what justice could he expect when witnesses were tampered with? The House seemed surprised. "Yes!" cried Barré, slapping his hand on the table; "tampered with!" Or perhaps the noble lord (Germaine) would give himself the trouble to reply, and explain about Colonel Dixon. Dixon was an officer of engineers, a man of reputation. He was summoned to the Bar of that House as a witness. He was sent to—("Never by me," said Germaine. De Grey who sat behind him, said instantly, "I sent to him")—he was sent to, to go to the office of the American Secretary. "Feeling like a man of honour," he did not go. He then received a note, pressing him to go to the office, or suffer himself to be waited on, in order to talk over the American business. He wrote back that as he was to be a witness he thought it improper to converse at all upon the subject, previous to his examination, and begged to be excused coming. Some time after he received notice that he need not continue in town — his services would be dispensed with.

De Grey explained that he only meant just to tell Dixon the sort of questions that would be put to him—just as a matter of civility. The Colonel had declined quite civilly, not hinting at anything wrong.

But Ministers thought it better not to call any more of their witnesses. So, on the 29th, Sir William Howe happening to come down to the House a quarter of an hour late, the adjournment was moved. "Thus the Committee expired." The incriminated Commanders were indignant, but Administration was saved.

Next day some scathing remarks were made on this neat trick. The Howes both challenged Germaine to bring his charge—if he had one. Nugent said no charge was ever intended — far from being blamed, the General and Admiral had the approbation of their Sovereign, and of all rational men, in the House and out of it, and if they would offer their services again, they would be accepted. Townshend commented on Galloway — who remembered every military manœuvre that had and had not taken place, but could not recollect his own conduct in Congress, nor even on what terms he held his pension, or whether it was for life or during pleasure. Townshend hoped it would be remembered that this enquiry was closed in the absence of those who were the objects of it—and that Ministers were silent. Dunning also

tried to goad them into speaking, but in vain. "Not one of the Ministers said a word; and thus the Enquiry was put an end to, without coming to a single Resolution upon any part of the evidence." And, it may be added, without one gleam of light being thrown upon the despatch *intended* to be sent to General Burgoyne.

Horace Walpole cannot be called a genial critic, but he had the merit of plain speaking, and he reflects the opinions of persons who were in a position to know the truth. His judgment of the military leaders is not flattering. Of Gage he says, that he was "not only totally insufficient, but his wife was American, and supposed to betray all his orders and councils to her countrymen." Sir William Howe "had not a glimmering of parts, and even undertook the command against his principles, if he had any." Poor Burgoyne (Walpole delighted to call him *Hurlothrumbo*) "was the most verbose and bombast boaster that ever bore a truncheon." He admits, however, that the unlucky General "did not want spirit nor knowledge," and that "his masters seem to have sacrificed him because he did not execute a bad or impossible plan drawn by them." He calls Sir Henry Clinton — apparently rather unjustly—"a very weak man." Lord Cornwallis was "dull and brave, and more in earnest than was consistent with his principles," which had condemned the war. Walpole also calls him "too silent and modest" to defend himself from blame. He gives most praise to Carleton — "A grave man, and good officer"—adding, with characteristic cynicism, that if he was not sensible he had the sense to conceal it.

CHAPTER LXXXI

THE SPANISH RESCRIPT

"His Majesty declares, in the most solemn manner, that his desire to preserve and to cultivate peace . . . with the Court of Spain has been uniform and sincere . . . and his Majesty sees with the greatest surprise the pretences on which this declaration is grounded, as some of the grievances enumerated in that paper have *never* come to the knowledge of his Majesty, either by representation on the part of the Catholic King, or by intelligence from any other quarter; and in all those cases where applications have been received, the matter of complaint has been treated with the *utmost attention*, and put into a course of enquiry and redress."—*The King's Message on the Spanish Rescript*, June 17, 1779.

AMONG the examinations of witnesses on the conduct of the war, came a Debate on the Budget. North calls it "the tail of the Budget"—perhaps because the sting was in the tail, for it was "a general account of debtor and creditor." Supply already voted, near 12 millions; Army Extraordinaries, £3,197,000, and so on. And a deficit of 5 millions to be made good somehow. He would charge the Sinking Fund with 2 millions of it, and by other expedients would reduce the deficit to £1,400,000—for this he looked to the Company, for renewing their Charter. He moved for a Vote of Credit for a million.

Then Hartley made one of those speeches so terrible to Administration—a speech full of facts and figures. And from it he went to a still more dreaded question—the naval force of Spain. Forty ships of the line, as he would show by the two lists he took from his pocket—lists he had got from a person who had been on board every ship, and could describe its condition. He was ready to produce this person at the Bar. The fleet of France just about balanced ours—so if Spain threw her forty ships into the scale——

Here Nugent tried to bluster—he would not sit to hear it said we hold the empire of the Sea at the will of the House of Bourbon. But Hartley had got his remorseless figures, and knew that one more 80-gun ship, five 74's and two 64's had been built in Spain since these lists were made.

Burke said the Minister was preparing for another American campaign—he told us so early in the session. The present was to be "moderately fed," but (from the disposition of the people to return to us, and the inability of Congress to govern) the fate of America would be determined in 1780. He remembered well how the House resounded with "Hear 'ems!" when the noble lord said the war was to be "moderately fed," "while twenty fat contractors cried with one voice—some in hoarser, some in more sonorous accents, 'Feed! feed! feed!'" like so many ravens and birds of prey. Then he showed the vanity of looking to the Company for a revenue. Their great military establishment swallows up their territorial revenues—all they can do is to hold their own, annoy our enemies out there, and add to the aggregate strength and dignity of the British Empire; but as for a regular revenue, we tried the experiment before, and had to forego "the ideal revenue of £400,000," but not till the Company was bankrupt, and came to this House for aid. Hartley had spoken as though Spain was still neutral—but "all neutrality and mediation is over"—the Treaty is determined—will be signed within a week—perhaps within five days. Spain is now actually leagued with France; "but I do not despair, if we can get rid of the American war," and of the present Ministry. He called upon North to deny that Spain was already leagued with France. "If he does not contradict it, I shall take it for granted."

North did not contradict it. Three days after, in the Debate on the Vote of Credit, being challenged by Townshend, he said that mediation certainly was at an end—but Spain was still friendly. And the reports from Ireland were greatly exaggerated—there were some non-importation agreements, but he had heard of nothing more. And while Fox was urging toleration in general, and especially to the Dissenters of Ireland, Lord George Gordon interrupted him to tell the House of the victory the Kirk of Scotland had lately gained over popery.

For many months past Spain had been endeavouring to act as mediator between Great Britain and France. There is no reason to doubt her sincerity—if the war continued she would be compelled to fulfil her pledges to France, and she had had enough of war. The warnings of Opposition were now justified. They had implored Administration to agree with the adversary whiles they were in the way with him, and make peace with America before any other nation became involved in the quarrel. Administration scoffed at their prophecies—France would never aid America openly. Then came the French Treaty, and again Opposition implored for a settlement before Spain should join

France. Again Ministers talked easily of the pacific intentions of the King of Spain. As the end of the session approached, and the sinister rumours became louder, Opposition tried one desperate motion after another, proposing anything, everything, to save the country from having to fight France, Spain, and America, with Sandwich, Germaine, and North in office. If not peace, if not the acknowledgment of independence, then a truce—a ten years' truce—with America. But this Administration must be swept out, with all the machinery of corruption that lies behind it. Many despairing efforts were made in both Houses. And to them all Administration answered by the simple process of voting down. All the facts, all the conclusions to be drawn from those facts, all probability and reason, were on the side of Opposition—and all the faith and courage. On the side of Administration there were—votes; votes how obtained the whole country knew. That they were bought with pensions and places, and actual passing of promises on the Treasury, was denied by no man. All Administration ever said was that the gentlemen they had laid under such great obligations forgot them when they voted, and were therefore purely disinterested. The incident of the "fat contractors" crying "Feed!" sums up in one vivid touch the whole procedure of the North Administration.

A scarcely credible trick was resorted to to get the report of the Resolution for the Vote of Credit received without further debate. On the 3rd of June there were only twelve members present. Sir Philip Clerke had come down early, and had been on the watch since prayers, expecting every instant to hear the report offered. He meant to give trouble—he was determined not to assent to the voting away of a million without knowing the intentions of Ministers as to America, and the real dispositions of Spain. An hour passed. The House was resolving itself into a Committee on the American Correspondence. Resolved to be satisfied, Clerke whispered the Speaker to know what had become of the report. The Speaker said it had just been reported. "At this instant a loud laugh came from the Treasury-bench, apparently on account of their having smuggled the report, and eluded his vigilance." By the connivance of the Speaker, they had got the report offered and put to the House in such a manner, that Clerke, sitting at the Speaker's elbow, and watching for it, did not hear! But, as Barré said, "They dreaded to be called on for explanations which they dared not give." So a million was got out of the people's pocket by a trick, and the Treasury-bench laughed.

This indefatigable Opposition now brought forward one more

motion for peace with America. North said America must make the application—then we will do all in our power for an honourable peace. It rests with Congress. Meanwhile we cannot repeal the Prohibitory Act, because then we could not carry on the war—that Act allows us to seize the American privateers. Meredith had said the Americans would not treat with the present Ministers—if so, why ask us to concert measures? Fox commented on General Robertson's evidence—he believed him to be an honourable man, but at the very beginning of his examination he had told the House he did not speak of his own knowledge of things as they now are—all he said about the goodwill of America to this country was true twenty years ago! After a long debate the motion was lost without a division.

On the 15th Townshend's motion to defer the Prorogation was lost by two to one; and on the 17th the bolt fell. That day the King sent a Message to both Houses, informing them that the King of Spain had recalled his Ambassador, and that Lord Grantham was ordered to leave Madrid. With the Message the King sent the Spanish Rescript. This document began by taking credit for "the noble impartiality" of Charles III in the disputes between Great Britain, America, and France. He had offered his mediation, which was accepted by the belligerents, and for this motive a ship of war was sent by his Britannic Majesty to a Spanish port. For eight months the King of Spain had been taking "the most energetic steps" to bring about an accommodation. "*But although his Majesty's propositions, and particularly those of his ultimatum,*[1] *have been conformable to those which at other times the Court of London*

[1] The Ultimatum (given to the Courts on April 3, 1779) contained these conditions. "A general disarming, within one month, in all the European seas; within four, in those of America; within eight, in the remote parts of Africa and Asia. In the space of one month, a place shall be fixed upon, in which the Plenipotentiaries of the two Courts shall meet to treat of peace; regulate the respective restitutions or compensations necessary, in consequence of the reprisals that have been made, without any declaration of war; and settle such matters of complaint or pretension, as the one Crown may have against the other." The King offered Madrid as the place for "this Congress." A like suspension of hostilities to be granted separately by the King of Great Britain to the American Colonies, through the mediation of his Catholic Majesty, with a promise that the truce shall not be broken without a year's notice. For settling these and other particulars, one or more Commissioners or Agents of the Colonies and his Britannic Majesty shall come to Madrid, and in the meantime the Colonies shall be treated as Independent. Finally, if it be desired, all the fore-mentioned powers shall, jointly with Spain, guarantee the treaties or agreements which shall be made, the Catholic King now offering his own guarantee.

itself had appeared to judge proper for an accommodation, and which were also quite as moderate, they have been rejected in a manner that fully proves the little desire which the British Cabinet has to restore peace to Europe, and to preserve the King's friendship."

The Rescript went on to charge the British Cabinet with having prolonged the negotiations for eight months, "by vain pretences and inconclusive answers"; all the while continuing to insult the Spanish flag, and violate Spanish territory; prizes have been made, ships have been searched and plundered, and a great number of them have been fired upon . . . registers have been opened and torn in pieces—even the packets of the Court found on board the King's packet-boat. It had tried to stir up "the Indian nations—the Chatcas, Cheroquies, and Chicachas, against the innocent inhabitants of Louisiana," who would have been their victims, if the Chatcas themselves had not repented, and revealed "all the seduction the English had planned." The territory of Honduras Bay had been violated, in breach of the 16th Article of the Treaty of Paris. In spite of complaints and memorials, such insults have been repeated, "which lately have amounted to the number of one hundred."

As soon as the King's Message had been read, Weymouth moved the usual loyal Address, devoting "lives and fortunes" to support his Majesty against all attempts on the honour of his Crown. Abingdon passionately declared that he would never assent to such an Address, but would divide the House though his were the only dissentient voice, "until the grievances of the people are redressed, by his Majesty driving from his councils those wicked and abandoned wretches of ministers" who have wantonly, openly, and defiantly not only broken down the fences of the Constitution, but have exposed us to be destroyed by our enemies. He moved for another sentence to be added to the Address — praying for the removal of the present Ministers; 23 voted with him, 62 against. Then Richmond moved the same thing in somewhat more moderate language. In his speech, he urged the necessity of union — our situation was truly awful, but we must not despond. "He spoke much of the exertions of a free people engaged in a just cause." Every man must now assist — those who could not, must pay. "When the safety of the State was at stake, all reasoning was at an end." Even if we had not money, we could devise means to supply that want. America had no money, but had issued paper — what America had done we could do. And Ireland must be conciliated—and Scotland—

both in bad temper; Ireland represented as on the eve of vindicating what she understood to be her natural and political rights — Scotland said to be ripe for insurrection. We must change our system; we must abandon the American war — at least for the present. The sole object of his motion was this —to alter the system which had brought us to this calamitous situation.[1] Weymouth made scarcely any reply, only noticing the attack on Ministers. What they had done was of little consequence—Spain had decided—the question is whether we shall repel the attacks of our enemy?

In the Commons, Burke, interrupted by the Speaker, who insisted he should make a motion, said there was one he could make—the impeachment of the Minister! (pointing to North). Many cried, "Move! move!" There was a tumult. When the House was quiet, Burke moved to consider the State of the Nation. Barré and others commented severely on North's jaunty looks in coming down with such news. "I think I never saw him more cheerful," cried Barré. "I declare to God I thought he had some joyful news!" North said he did not know he had worn any particular smile on entering the House —if he did, "a grave and melancholy brow was not the best look in danger." "Englishmen were to feel like Englishmen, and not to be easily sunk down." This event had been long looked for.[2]

Then came Hartley's motion for reconciliation with America, North's for doubling the Militia, Wedderburn's for Manning the Navy more speedily.

Hartley ridiculed the pretence that one-fifth of the American people were able to defeat the ardent wishes of the other four-fifths for dependence on Great Britain — he knew they did not believe it, and that was why they said a ten years' truce would be the same as granting Independence. Fox, on the Militia Bill,[3] said North declared "no longer ago than last Tuesday" that it was right for Parliament to be prorogued, for no Spanish war was to be dreaded, yet came down two days afterwards with the Spanish Rescript!

As all their best sea officers had resigned in disgust, Ministers were obliged to take old Sir Charles Hardy, Governor of Greenwich Hospital, who had been retired for twenty years.

[1] Richmond's amendment was lost by 32 to 57.

[2] "I have no doubt next spring, Spain will join France."—*The King to Lord North*, October 13, 1778.

[3] June 22.

They had sent him to sea with only thirty ships, and let him sail the day before the Spanish Rescript was—as they knew—to be delivered, though if he had waited a week he could have had five or six—Ministers said seven or eight—more "capital ships!" They had also sent Admiral Arbuthnot off to America, with seven sail of the line, and a large body of troops, and other seven to the East Indies, knowing all the time of a Spanish war, and that the combined fleets of the House of Bourbon consisted of forty, fifty, "possibly sixty" sail of the line. North, pursued and driven to bay, entered into a defence of himself. He had come to office when the country was in great confusion—the nation in a ferment[1]—he assisted in maintaining government. We had been obliged to enter into a contest with "our rebellious subjects." France treacherously interfered before we could subdue them, had the insolence to tell us how we ought to treat "our own subjects," and tried to deprive us of a third part of our Empire. The hon. gentleman (Fox) asks why I did not resign? I will tell him why—I was always determined never to resign till I could do so with honour. And ought I to resign now when we have the united force of the House of Bourbon to contend with? He desires me to retire with the plunder I have amassed. (Fox, "Not plunder; fortune.") He says, to save his country, he would let me escape with impunity, if I will resign—but he couples this with a threat, that if I do not I shall be brought to condign punishment. There is nothing I more ardently desire than a public trial—I shall insist on the exercise of that justice—"*I shall and must be tried, be the event of the present measures what they may.*" As for "plunder" or fortune—when I came into office, my private fortune was not very considerable—when I go out, I shall not be richer—"that, I presume, *if my assertion gains credit, is a full answer to the amassing a fortune,*" so far as the charge that the British Cabinet is bought and sold.

This day the unfortunate Minister did not look as though he had joyful news—one of his children lay dead.

In this debate Governor Pownall gave some interesting details on the working of Militia Bills in America. In his province, in the last war, 48,000 men were bound to be furnished with arms and ammunition. This included every individual without distinction, but a part were to turn out only in case of insurrection or invasion; 27,605 were to be constantly

[1] Alluding to the Middlesex Election.

exercised—out of these 7000 were drafted each year for actual service. If there was danger of invasion, the training list must attend, and take the field. If there was an actual invasion, then the whole must turn out, under martial law—"every man, without distinction, even the clergy. And these were the kind of troops, which, upon a British army's attempting to penetrate into their country, surrounded and took that British army."

The Bill for Manning the Navy was moved at twenty minutes after midnight on the 25th of June, by Wedderburn. It was for taking away all exemptions for a limited time,—all seamen, seafaring persons and watermen, and their apprentices, might be pressed, Habeas Corpus notwithstanding. He grounded the Bill on the imminent danger of the country—the Navy was our great bulwark. Sir Charles Hardy's fleet was inferior to the services required of it—the fact was, the ships were ready but not the men—there were six or eight ships waiting for their complements, and if Sir Charles had them he would be strong enough to face the enemy. He apologised for bringing on so important a Bill so late, and in such a thin House, when many had gone home, not expecting anything of importance would be agitated[1]—but he was free to declare that he had done it on purpose, lest any notice of the measure should get out—he was fearful, if it were publicly known, the great object of the Bill would be defeated. Orders for a most vigorous impress of all useful hands had already been issued, without any regard to the laws now in being. They could not wait for the Royal Assent—if they did, every man thus pressed could bring an action for false imprisonment—worse still, he could sue out a writ of Habeas Corpus. The Act must therefore be retrospective, and must date from June 16.

To this extraordinary proposal Savile replied that it made the House act as so many midnight conspirators, who, under cover of devising measures for national safety, plotted its destruction in the dark, like so many hired ruffians, with weapons under their cloaks.

[1] During this debate there is a very curious reference to the bad ventilation of the House. On June 24 Sir Charles Bunbury said he had been obliged to leave early the night before, on account of "the putrid air of the House." In so enlightened and philosophic an age as the present, he was astonished that gentlemen were not instructed from books, if not from their own experience of the ill consequences of many persons breathing the same air for many hours—they had only to read Dr. Priestley's works to be convinced. They might at least have the windows opened at that season of the year, when the doors were thrown open. He was perfectly serious, and he spoke from feeling.—(*Debate on the Militia.*)

Such an Act might be necessary, but why bring it forward at such an hour? "Lest the public should be apprised of it." Wedderburn defended the Bill on the ground of necessity. It was only for a time. The difference of a day might defeat the object—meaning that seamen would escape. Much had to be sacrificed and borne, but we were fighting for our all—and the sufferings would be only temporary. Clerke said this was worse than breaking into a house at dead of night—why not do it in the day, and in the face of the nation? Savile said the Militia Bill had just compelled 30,000 men to become soldiers contrary to their habits of life; this compels the services of men exempted by the laws of their country. At one o'clock the Bill was read a first time—then read a second, and committed for next day, when it passed without opposition.

In the Lords the two Bills were considered together. In that debate we learn that there was a report that the Cabinet had resolved to invite Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick to come and take the command of our home army, and superintend our defences. The Duke of Bolton asked Ministers if they had seriously considered what this would mean to every British officer? While a Keppel and a Howe were unemployed in our fleets, and a Howe and a Burgoyne unemployed in our armies, we were proposing to invite foreigners to protect us from a foreign foe!

No Minister seems to have replied to this. The day the Navy Bill was read a third time the Earl of Bristol reminded Ministers of the officers "mouldering on shore whose minds were at sea"—Keppel, Lord Howe, Sir Robert Harland, Admiral Pigot, Lord Shuldam,—officers whose breasts were fired with the truest zeal for their country's honour.

To the great surprise of everybody, the Lords threw out the essential clause of the Militia Bill—that empowering the King to order the Militia to be doubled. This took away all compulsion. Only 22 Lords voted for the clause; Opposition found themselves in a majority (39). There was nothing left of the Bill but permission to raise volunteer companies. On its return to the Commons the point of privilege was raised, but Ministers wanted to seem to be doing something, and the now almost useless Bill was got through, and on July 3 Administration was delivered for a time from the troubling of Opposition. On that day the King prorogued both Houses.

CHAPTER LXXXII

AS OTHERS SAW US

"The Closed Sea; or Two Books concerning the Dominion of the Sea. In the first it is demonstrated that the sea, by the law of nature and of nations, is not common to mankind, but is capable of private dominion, or property, equally with the land. In the second, it is maintained that the King of Great Britain is Lord of the circumfluent sea, as an inseparable and perpetual appanage of the British Empire."—Title-page of the English Edition of Selden's *Mare Clausum*, 1652. (An answer to the *Mare Liberum* of Grotius, who maintained that the sea is free to all nations.)

"There is no Prince in Christendom but is directly a Tradesman, though in another way than an ordinary Tradesman. For the purpose, I have a Man; I bid him lay out twenty shillings in such Commodities; but I tell him for every shilling he lays out I will have a penny. I trade as well as he. This every Prince does in his Customs."—Selden, *Table-Talk*.

THERE was soon a war of Manifestos and Observations, extremely important and interesting, not only because they show us the other side of the question, but because they throw much light on the practical working of the commercial system crystallised by the Treaty of Utrecht.

Louis XVI led off, early in 1779, with the "Manifesto." It begins by saying that the first concern of the King of France, on succeeding to the throne at a time of profound peace, had been to signify to all the Powers of Europe his desire that peace should continue. This disposition had been generally applauded, especially by the King of England, which justified him in hoping that the Court of London was at last disposed to adopt a mode of conduct more equitable and friendly than had been the case since the peace of 1763; "and that a final stop would be put to those acts of tyranny," which his subjects had experienced in every part of the globe. But this peaceable disposition was attributed to fear or feebleness, and "the harassing acts of violence against the commerce and navigation of France" continued, in spite of remonstrances. But the King of France forbore to insist too hastily on reparation, knowing the em-

barrassment which the affairs of America were causing the Court of London.

When the United States of North America wished to open a direct commerce with the other Powers of Europe, the King of France would have neglected the most essential interests of his subjects if he had refused the Americans admission into his ports, or participation in the commercial advantages enjoyed by every other nation. This conduct was adopted by far the greater part of the commercial States of Europe; but the Court of London complained of it with bitterness. "It imagined, no doubt, that it had but to employ its usual style of haughtiness and ambition, to obtain of France an unbounded deference to its will." His Majesty opposed nothing but the calmness of justice, and the moderation of reason. He gave the King of England plainly to understand that he neither was, nor pretended to be, a judge of his dispute with the Colonies; much less was it his business to avenge it—"he was under no obligation to treat Americans as rebels; to exclude them from his ports, and to prohibit them from all commercial intercourse with his subjects." He was ready, as much as depended on him, to "shackle" the exportation of arms, and would not only not protect this species of commerce, but would give England free permission to stop French subjects detected carrying it on. He would observe the faith of treaties, and the laws and usages of the sea. He had observed all the commercial stipulations of the Treaty of Utrecht, although it was daily violated by the Court of London; and England, at the time, had refused to ratify parts of it. He had interdicted American privateers from arming in his ports, nor would he suffer them to sell their prizes in France, nor to remain longer in port than was stipulated by the Treaty of Utrecht.

With regard to the Treaty with America, it was at once communicated to the English Ambassador, in a Rescript, than which nothing could be less offensive. But the King of England announced this declaration to his Parliament as an act of hostility and formal aggression—the fact being that the treaty upset the negotiations which the King of England was attempting, "for a sudden and precarious coalition with America."

The immense preparations being made in the ports of England were manifestly directed against France. It is notorious that the armaments of France were ready long before those of England—it was in his Majesty's power to have made a sudden descent on England. But there was a whisper of peace, and that stayed his hand. But the demand to withdraw the Rescript was inadmissible

—the King of Spain, who had been asked by the Court of London to act as mediator, was amazed at it, though he ordered his *chargé d'affaires* in London not to say so. Hopes of peace continued, until Admirals Keppel and Byron sailed. The world saw how the *Belle Poule* was attacked by an English frigate, in sight of the French coast, and how two other frigates were surprised and captured.

The Manifesto claims the 27th of July as a French victory—the English "were forced to retreat with considerable damage." Since then, hostilities have continued without any declaration of war. The Court of London has not declared it, because she does not know what reason to give—after capturing three French ships, she can hardly say that France was the aggressor! With a hint at "clandestine orders" sent to India, which will enable the other Powers to say who ought to be called *Perfidious*. The King of France has not declared war, because he has continued to hope that "the English Minister would at last recollect himself"—all the more as he is always sending emissaries to sound his Majesty.

Gibbon was made to write a "Justifying Memorial"[1] in reply to the Manifesto. He admits that the "connections" with America were the cause of the war, but says that by the law of nations such connections "might be regarded as an infraction of peace," and the public avowal of them as equal to a declaration of war. He is very angry at the charge of perfidy—the King of France says that the King of England maintained a secret war under the appearance of peace, and goes back sixty years, to reproach us with violating the commercial part of the Treaty of Utrecht. He presumes to call us haughty and ambitious. But what he and the King of Spain really want, is to put bounds to our empire of the Seas. It is the Court of Versailles that is treacherous! If we increased our navy, it was to maintain the tranquillity of Europe. And the very first Article of the Treaty of 1763 says that the three parties (England, France, and Spain) promise to give no succour, direct or indirect, to the enemies of any one of them. This bound France to shut her ports to American ships, and forbid her subjects any commerce with that rebellious people—but the French merchants have furnished America not only with merchandise, but even with saltpetre, and gunpowder, ammunition, arms, artillery, and boasted that the French Ministry protected them. The chief of that enterprise was established in Paris, and had correspondents at Dunkirk, Nantes, and Bordeaux. Immense magazines were formed, ships scarcely dissembled their destination.

[1] It was written in French.

They took false clearances for the French islands, but the fraud was known, and they were captured by British ships in sight of the American coasts. Those that got off delivered up their cargoes to the rebels, so we know we were not mistaken.

Gibbon then mentions by name the Sieur de Beaumarchais and his partners. In January, 1777, they fitted out nine large ships, besides the *Amphitrite*, which about the same time carried a great quantity of ammunition and thirty French officers, who entered the service of the rebels. The same November, Lord Stormont reported a 60-gun ship at Rochefort, and an East India ship, pierced for 40 guns, at L'Orient—both belonging to Chaumont, Holken, and Sebatier. There was also *l'Heureux*, which sailed from Marseilles to New Hampshire, and *l'Hippopotame*, belonging to the Sieur Beaumarchais—in all about fifty French ships were preparing to sail for America with ammunition for the rebels—from Nantes, L'Orient, St. Malo, Havre, Bordeaux, Bayonne, and other ports. These things could not have happened without the French King's will.

Thus personally attacked, Beaumarchais replied.[1] He calls himself "Armateur et Citoyen de France," and dedicates his reply to his country. What is this nation which calls us perfidious? Is it not the English nation, "unjust to us by system"? Did not their great politician Chatham say, "If we attempt to be just towards France and Spain, we shall have too much to restore. To weaken them is our only rule, and the basis of all our success"? They have always gone to war with us without declaring it. In 1754 they assassinated M. de Jumonville in Canada, at the meeting for a Convention of Peace. They began the war in 1755 by seizing 500 of our ships, in full peace, and ended it by the most intolerable abuse of the advantages they had gained in that unjust war. In 1774 Mr. Macnamara, Governor of Senegal, carried off a French ship—never restored. In 1776, after outraging us in every shape in India, they fired on our ships at the passage of Calcutta, and added insult to injury by sending us surgeons to dress the wounded. England arrogates to herself the right to be a universal Custom-house, and visit ships at sea—she harasses our merchantmen in sight of our own coasts.

Beaumarchais had got the whole story of our relations with the Colonies—knew that Chatham had said, if we let the Americans make a single horseshoe they would end by casting off their obedience; and was acquainted with all the "oppres-

[1] *Observations on the Justifying Memorial.*

sive" measures which ended in the formation of "that illustrious body, the Congress of Philadelphia." He knew that in Virginia we had tried to arm the slaves against their masters. And he knew that the House of Brunswick reigned by virtue of an insurrection on the same principles as those of the rebels in America! He knew that Lord Abingdon had said the people had a right to resume power which was misused by a Prince or Minister. He knew that in England it was a moot point "who was the greatest rebel to the constitution, the Englishman or the American?" How can a foreign Prince understand their quarrel, when they don't themselves?

He then asked the questions debated by "the logicians of Oxford, Cambridge and London"—whether the King of France ought to shut his ports to both belligerents, or only to one? Ought he to restrain his own commercial privileges to oblige a nation which pays no respect to the rights of *any* nation? The King does not prevent the English from buying of us by allowing the Americans to buy too!

Our Ministers treated those of us who wanted to trade with America with uncommon rigour—and now the polite writer of the *Mémoire Justificatif* calls them perfidious! They were always struggling to repress our trade! It would seem strange indeed to Europe, if the King of France let his tobacco-farm pay a hundred livres a quintal for that useful article—or even went without it—while America was over-stocked with it. The English, who can supply it no longer, forbid us to buy it in the only country in the world where it grows in perfection! And if we are to talk about *droit naturel*, France would be justified in taking every opportunity of revenging herself on England, and humbling her—but she has not done so. *We* might have fallen unexpectedly on *her* merchantmen, but a nice sense of honour restrained us!

He is very bitter against Stormont—who tried to advance himself by making mischief.

I avow with pleasure that I thought those "vile dastardly cowards" of the other Continent might perhaps effect the humiliation of haughty overbearing England, with "the simple aid of a few obscure French merchants." Why does not Lord Stormont say that the Minister of Marine—on his information—stopped my nine ships—including the *Amphitrite* frigate? They were all stopped at Havre, publicly unloaded and searched, to the great injury of my expedition. Why does he not say he made me disarm my ships, whereby some were taken? The

chief French officer was ordered to rejoin his corps at Metz, and when he disobeyed was ordered to be arrested and broke, and imprisoned for life. He got off by escaping almost naked. And, after all, what was it to us if some of our officers did wish to employ their leisure in this noble manner, by fighting for America? Did not Marshal Thomond's nephew, Count Bulkley —"the most zealous Englishman ever allowed to be in the service of France"—did not he get leave from our Ministers to go to London and offer his services *against* America? Politics is at bottom a sublime imposture! But nobody ever saw an Ambassador who took such liberties as Lord Stormont on the strength of that imposture!

I have even been accused in America of being bribed by the Court of London to give our Ministers a hint to stop my own ships, at a time when I was lying awake of nights, and emaciating myself with anxiety and fatigue—comforted only by the thought that a great people would soon be offering a safe retreat for all the persecuted of Europe—and my country would be avenged for the humiliation fixed on her by the Treaty of 1763, *fixing the small number of ships she was allowed to keep up.* I also hoped that the dark veil with which our port of Dunkirk has been enveloped for sixty years would be torn asunder, and the Ocean become free to all commercial nations, and Marseilles, Nantes, and Bordeaux dispute the commercial palm with London. *I hoped, too, to see the present reign one of the most brilliant of the French monarchy.* And so when one of the English Ministers bantered me one day about the *Amphitrite*, and said I was a good politician but a poor merchant, I answered that time would show whether I in my little trade, or he in his great administration, would be more successful. On the return of the *Amphitrite*, my captain was thrown into prison, because when he had been ninety days at sea—thirty-five without a reckoning—and was on the point of perishing, he dropped anchor on the American coast, having promised he would only go to St. Domingo. *L'Heureux* was twice publicly unloaded—I was almost ruined by the expenses of the long delay. Then my great ship, *l'Hippopotame*—which I re-named *le Fier Rodrigue*—was a king's ship of the line. I bought her at Rochefort (very dear), and fitted her up as an armed merchantman. Her cargo was worth a million livres—wine, brandy, dry goods—but not a single military weapon, nor one chest of arms. But Lord Stormont heard of her, and began his whinings (*criallieries*), not knowing she belonged to me, as the armament was done under a fictitious name.

Here Beaumarchais gives his own letter to the Minister of Marine. It protests that the *Hippopotame* was only armed for self-defence — he could not risk her being fired at, searched, plundered—perhaps confiscated, as happened to many others, if a yard of stuff found in her happened to be of a colour or quality which displeased the first dishonest Englishman who fell in with her—and then the Ambassador would get out of it by the usual answer—"The Captain was drunk"; or "There was some misunderstanding." Then Beaumarchais quotes Voltaire—

"L'injustice à la fin produit l'indépendance;" and concludes, "Perhaps, O Englishman, you may soon have to lament the loss of Ireland, so long abused by you!"

Louis XVI was far from pleased with this performance of the Author of *Figaro*. There were "several bold assertions," especially that about the Treaty of Paris and the number of ships. No such article was in the Treaty, public or secret. The King therefore suppressed the *Observations of Pierre-Augustine Caron de Beaumarchais*, forbade booksellers and hawkers to sell it, and ordered all copies already sold to be brought within fifteen days to the Registry of the Council — there to be "suppressed." Beaumarchais was in dire disgrace, and is said to have been imprisoned for a short time.

The King then put forth his own Observations, which do not differ from those of Beaumarchais, except as to the Treaty of 1763. Louis accuses Stormont of establishing "an indecent, scandalous and unexampled train of spies" in every part of France. Those few of his complaints which had any foundation were followed by immediate reparation. The King gave in to most of the English demands—from a desire for peace. But the English behaved in a most violent and arbitrary manner to French merchantmen; even when their papers were in order, they broke open bulkheads, overhauled cargoes, and plundered a long list of ships. As for giving a false destination—all the English smugglers do it, and the English Government encourages them. When the American privateers began to harass English shipping, and letters of marque were issued, France made friendly representation, and was promised that these letters of marque should only be used against Americans. But these armed merchantmen stopped and carried to England several French ships, on the pretext that they had merchandise for America. Another list follows here.

After the defeat of Burgoyne, Commissioners of Peace were sent to America—to propose peace if the Americans *would make*

a coalition against France. "A wish to humble France had long been the very essence of English politics." Great armaments were suddenly put in hand, and hostile orders were sent to India *before* any treaty was signed. The American Deputies meanwhile were offering a treaty of commerce, and an offensive and defensive alliance, with the acknowledgment of independence. Louis very truly says that America was independent in fact already —but he declined a formal acknowledgment, or an offensive alliance. He signed the Treaty of Commerce. Afterwards, expecting to be attacked, he consented to the second treaty, whereby he promised, *if he were attacked before a cessation of hostilities in America,* to guarantee the independence and sovereignty of the United States, and not to lay down his arms till this was acknowledged by Great Britain. This "left the King of England absolute master of war and peace." The rupture was the act of the Court of London. The second treaty was kept secret, because it would not take effect unless there was war.

The Observations then go into the precedent of Queen Elizabeth's aid to the Netherlands, and assert that both the law of nations, and the example of England herself, authorised the King of France to look on America as independent. He violated no treaty, nor was the commercial treaty an offence to England. As for Spain, she did her best to mediate, but her efforts were represented as mere fraud and dissimulation. It cannot be expected that Spain should remain a quiet spectator while France is attacked—with a final sentence about setting bounds to the power which Britain had abused.

CHAPTER LXXXIII

THE ENEMY'S FLEETS OFF PLYMOUTH

"I have heard Lord North frequently drop that the advantages to be gained by this contest could never pay the expense; I owne that, let any war be ever so successful, if persons will sit down and weigh the expences, they will find, as in the last, that it has impoverished the state, enriched individuals, and perhaps raised the name only of the conquerors; but this is only weighing such events in the scale of a tradesman behind his counter. . . . The present contest with America I cannot help seeing as the most serious in which any country was ever engaged. . . . Whether the laying a tax was deserving all the evils that have arisen from it, I should suppose no man could alledge that without being thought more fit for Bedlam than a seat in the Senate."—*The King to Lord North*, June 11, 1779.

"All people see the necessity of withdrawing the troops from America. None of the Tories in town stayed out the debate the other night, except Baldwyn, who voted with us, and declared himself *sick* of America."—*FitzPatrick to Lord Ossory*, June 19, 1779.

THE real underlying motive of both Spain and France, was to wrest from England that empire of the Sea which she asserted as her natural right, and took no pains to exercise in a conciliatory manner. The Right of Search was a constant irritation to foreign Powers; and as it co-existed with a systematic contraband trade[1] on the Spanish main, the grievance was more than sentimental.

The Marquis d'Almovodar, the Spanish Ambassador, left England on June 21,[2] and the country began to make hurried preparations to resist invasion. On the 2nd of July the East India Company sent a deputation to the King, offering to raise 6000 seamen, and to build three 74's. On the 9th a Proclamation ordered all horses, oxen, cattle and provisions to be removed from the seacoast. The same day, Cunningham, the privateer captain who took the Dutch mail, was brought prisoner

[1] This contraband trade caused the war of 1739.

[2] He seems to have left the country in a very friendly manner—two days before he had given a "grand entertainment to the nobility of both sexes." When he embarked at Dover he was saluted by the guns from the Castle.

to Falmouth. On the 25th Sir Charles Hardy passed Plymouth with the fleet, "in quest of the enemy." A few days later the Leeward Islands merchant fleet, 130 sail, passed Portsmouth, and got safe to port—it brought news of the loss of St. Vincent's. On the 7th of August the Jamaica fleet came safe home. On the 16th an express arrived at the Admiralty, with the news that the combined fleets of France and Spain—60 sail of the line—had appeared off Plymouth Sound. For the best part of three days the fleets remained—watching, but, to the astonishment of everybody, attempting nothing. With smaller vessels they made up 90 sail. They were so near the land that the *Ardent*, 64 guns, coming from Portsmouth to join Hardy, mistook them for the English fleet, and got so close that she was attacked by two frigates before she discovered her mistake, and while she was actually reefing top-sails! The engagement lasted an hour and a half. Two other ships came to help the frigates. Those watching from Plymouth thought they saw the *Ardent* go down.[1]

Meanwhile the town was making frantic efforts—throwing up new fortifications, raising subscriptions to pay the labourers, preparing to take up the pavements, that the bombs—in case of bombardment—might sink harmless into the earth. The inhabitants were under arms, the youths were forming associations. Every duty—keeping guard, etc.—which civilians could perform, was done by them, to keep the garrison fresh for action—it was only 1000 men. They were more afraid of the French prisoners on land than of the French at sea—the prisoners were so numerous and refractory that it was necessary to remove them. When the enemy's fleet appeared in the offing, several prisoners escaped, seized boats, and tried to get off to their countrymen. Fortunately the sea was so high that they failed, and were all re-taken. The beautiful Mount Edgecumbe woods were hastily cut down, lest they should afford cover to an enemy in an attempt to destroy the dockyards.

All this while a strong east wind was preventing Hardy from coming up Channel to engage the enemy—it was also preventing the enemy from returning. From Wednesday the 18th to Sunday the 22nd it "blew a storm." On the 24th a cutter got in, with a message from Hardy to say he was in sight of the French, and hoped soon to bring them to action. He put his own force at

[1] The *Ardent* was not sunk—a later entry in the Chronicle of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (for August 30) says she "is now commissioned in the French king's service, and the captain and crew of the *Prothée* (now repairing) are removed on board of her."

41 sail of the line, ten 50-gun ships, and "a vast number of frigates, fire-ships, sloops, etc."[1]

On the 26th an officer arrived from Gibraltar, confirming that the Spaniards had invested the fortress by sea and land.

At last, on the 31st, the wind shifted, and Hardy entered the Channel in full sight of the combined fleets. He tried to draw them to the narrower part of the Channel—they followed as far as Plymouth, when, partly from dread of the autumn storms, they retired. They had hurried to sea in such haste that they were ill-manned—particularly the Spaniards. It transpired also that the crews were so sickly that they were almost disabled. Well might Opposition say that only Providence saved us. English coasts were now safe till next summer.

In May the French had made an unsuccessful attempt on Jersey. It had a serious effect on the American war. Admiral Arbuthnot, with a squadron and an enormous convoy (400 merchantmen and transports), was just setting out for New York when he met the vessel bringing to England the news of the French landing. It seemed that Jersey would be lost. Arbuthnot resolved to disobey orders—he ordered the convoy to wait for him in Torbay, while he went to the relief of Jersey. The actual delay was short—the French had been repulsed[2] before his arrival—but the convoy had lost the wind, with the usual consequence in those days of a long voyage. Arbuthnot did not reach New York with the reinforcements and stores for Sir Henry Clinton till the end of August.

The attempt on the Channel Islands failed; but now that Spain had joined the belligerents, the motions of the fleets became the vital question. Especially was it important to prevent the junction of the fleets by blocking up the French in Brest until it should be too late to do anything that season. But, somehow or other, we were not ready—the French fleet came out and joined the Spaniards at Cadiz. Probably the French had hurried out of port before they were ready, for they cruised about, but did nothing; and when the combined fleet crossed the Bay of Biscay, on its way to the British coast, it passed Sir Charles Hardy at sea with the whole Channel fleet, without either seeing the other!

In the West Indies we lost island after island. The whole of the "West India trade" assembled at St. Christopher's towards

[1] A list of "the Line of Battle, 5th August, 1779," gives him "3 ships of 100 guns, 1 of 98, 6 of 90, 1 of 80, 21 of 77, and 4 of 64"; this does not include frigates.

[2] By Sir James Wallace and Captain Gidoin.

the middle of June, ready to sail for England. Admiral Byron,[1] afraid the whole merchant fleet might fall into the hands of the French, escorted it a considerable part of the way. During his absence a small French force came over from Martinique to St. Vincent's. There were seven companies of regulars on the island, under a Lieutenant-Colonel, "the garrison also exceeding the invaders in number, and the island inhabited likewise by a people who had always shewn the utmost fierceness and eagerness for war, when it was accompanied with the hope of plundering the unfortunate Caribs of their lands;"[2] and yet this island was surrendered without a shot being fired on either side. The planters, who had oppressed the Caribs, and "led government into that disgraceful war for their extermination," were now terribly frightened, and appealed to the French for protection from their wretched victims.

D'Estaing—now joined by de la Motte Piquet with a strong reinforcement—arrived off Grenada on the 2nd of July. There were only 150 soldiers on the island, and 300 or 400 armed inhabitants, and the only defence was a fortified hill commanding the fort and town of St. George. On the 1st Byron had arrived at Sta. Lucia, and heard the French had taken St. Vincent without opposition. He consulted with Grant, and they resolved to attempt the recapture, but while Byron was preparing to sail he heard that the French fleet had been seen making for Grenada, and sent to tell Lord Macartney he would come to relieve him. He sailed on the 3rd, with 21 ships and a frigate, and next afternoon learned that more than 30 French men-of-war had passed St. Vincent on Thursday (July 1st). He instantly bore for Grenada—by this time he knew that de la Motte had joined d'Estaing. On his way Byron learned that Macartney was besieged in the fort by 2500 men, but thought he could hold out a fortnight. There were "from 14 to 19" ships of war there. On the 6th Byron sighted the French off Grenada—he soon found there were 34 of them, 26 of the line. He tried to bring on a close engagement, but the enemy's "superiority of sailing gave them the option of distance." A fierce engagement ensued, in which the French did great damage to Byron's masts and rigging, "when our shot did not reach them." He had five ships too disabled to keep up with the rest. About three in the afternoon the French tacked to southward, and Byron

[1] Admiral Byron was a brother of the Lord Byron who killed Mr. Chaworth. He was called "Foul Weather Jack" because he always had such terrible weather.

[2] *Annual Register.*

got close in to St. George's Bay—to see the French colours flying from the fort. Macartney had surrendered at discretion.[1]

Another instant consequence of war with Spain was the siege of Gibraltar.

On the 19th of June, when General Eliott, the Governor, paid a visit of congratulation to Mendoza, the new Spanish Commandant at St. Roque, it struck him that his reception was "far from agreeable." The Commandant seemed embarrassed, and Eliott made his visit short. Hardly had he returned when Logie, British Consul in Barbary, came over in a Swedish frigate with news that there would be war—he had heard it from another Swede, who had fallen in with the French fleet off Finisterre; the French Admiral had said he was expecting to be joined by the Spanish fleet from Cadiz. At first the Spanish garrison would not believe this, and "amicably" assured the English that it could not be true. But on the 21st the mail from the garrison was refused at the lines, and by an order from Madrid all communication was closed between Gibraltar and the country.[2]

Eliott called a Council of War. The first thing was to make sure of supplies from Barbary, and Logie was sent back next day —a code of signals being first arranged with him for communicating across the Straits—and then Eliott began to prepare for a siege. He collected depôts of earth and empty barrels; he laid in live stock from Tangier; the engineers set to work. Soon 300 Jews and Genoese were busy levelling the sand-heaps near the Gardens, lest they should afford cover to an enemy. Meanwhile the Spaniards were pouring in men to their lines—quietly, unobtrusively, but steadily. On July 6 they heard that hostilities had begun, and now prizes began to be brought in by Admiral Duff's squadron—mostly from the Spanish convoy which was trying to pass Europa Point. On the 16th the Spaniards blocked the port with a squadron which anchored in the Bay of Algeciras; and it became certain that the garrison were to be blockaded. They could see a camp forming below St. Roque, tents being pitched and ordnance landed. On the 20th Eliott forbade the use of flour for hair-powder.

By the beginning of August every ship that left was crowded

[1] Macartney's despatch says the terms offered were "the most extraordinary and unexampled project that ever entered into the mind of a general or politician." He rejected it, and all the principal inhabitants "were unanimous in preferring a surrender without any conditions at all, to the one that was offered." He does not say what it was.

[2] It was only by accident that the courier from Madrid did not arrive during Eliott's visit.—Drinkwater, *History of the Siege of Gibraltar*.

with Jews and Genoese escaping from the beleaguered town. On the 15th about 16,000 carts arrived in the enemy's camp, and unloaded timber, planks, etc. The Spanish works went on night and day—the garrison heard them dragging cannon all night, and soon found that they had "animated" all the embrasures in Fort St. Philip. A Spaniard who came in an open boat with a pass for Ceuta, and onions and fruit, was allowed to sell his cargo. He told them there were already 5000 or 6000 men in camp, and would soon be 15,000. On the 20th the enemy began a new camp "under the Queen of Spain's Chair."[1] On the Sunday after this Eliott made his first experiments with red-hot shot, and on September 12 he opened his batteries, but the forts were too distant to be much damaged by his fire.

He now ploughed up the pavement in the northern part of the town, that shots might not splinter it; took down the towers of the most conspicuous buildings, and made a covered way. The garrison dragged a gun to the summit of the northern front of the Rock—too impatient to wait till the new road was finished. From that post they had "nearly a bird's-eye view of the enemy's lines," and with glasses could see every movement. They also occasionally saw a deserter making off, and were much concerned lest he should betray the state of their provisions.

The weeks went on—with alarms at sea, prizes captured, and ships run ashore, while no news came from England, and provisions grew dearer and dearer, till mutton was 3s. 6d. a pound, pork 2s. 6d., and a goose a guinea. Fish was as high; vegetables hardly to be had for money; but bread was the article most wanted. Eliott was an extraordinarily abstemious man, "seldom tasting anything but vegetables, simple puddings, and water; and yet was very hale, and used constant exercise." He now experimented on himself to see on how little rice a man could live for twenty-four hours—he himself lived for 8 days on 4 oz. a day.

On October 14 there was a great excitement—the *Buck* cutter, Captain Fagg, ran the gauntlet of the Spanish fleet, and got in. Great was the disappointment of the garrison to find she was only a privateer, weeks at sea, and only come in for provisions. The Governor gave them—"what indeed could be refused to the man by whose boldness the port was open once more?" But they had hoped she brought news!

The "Straits" extend about 36 miles, from Cape Spertel to Ceuta Point on the African coast, and from Cape Trafalgar to

[1] The garrison thought this was for the Catalonian troops, "as they usually encamped separate from the rest of the Spanish forces."—DRINKWATER.

Europa Point on the coast of Spain. At the western entrance they are about 24 miles broad, but they diminish considerably towards the middle, opposite Tarifa, and widen again between Gibraltar and Ceuta, where they are about 15 miles across.

All this while, Logie was getting despatches into Gibraltar by Mogadore, in South Barbary, whence a Moor brought them over to Gibraltar. The Spaniards got hold of this Moor, and offered him a great bribe to give up the mails and say he had been robbed on his way. But the Moor told Logie, and by a clever stratagem false despatches were prepared, and seized by the Spaniards, while the genuine mail came safe across next day.

The New Year came in. The bakers had long been limited to the quantity of bread issued daily, and sentries were placed at wickets to prevent riot when the bread was distributed; but the strongest pushed in first, and it often happened that women, children, and infirm persons went empty away. Even the soldiers suffered terribly from want. Thistles, dandelion, wild leek were for some time the food of numbers. No relief came from England, and supplies from Barbary had almost ceased. Famine stared them in the face. They seemed to be abandoned. By this time an egg cost 6d., and the fishermen demanded great prices for fish the garrison would not have looked at some months ago. An ingenious Hanoverian hit on a way of hatching chickens, and a capon was taught to rear them.

CHAPTER LXXXIV

THE DEBATES ON THE ADDRESS, NOVEMBER 25, 1779

"Never did a deeper political gloom overspread England, than in the autumn of 1779, when I arrived from the Continent. I question whether at the time of the Destruction of the Ships of war lying in the Medway, burnt by the Dutch, under Charles the Second, or again the Defeat of the English and Dutch Fleets by the French, off Beachy-Head in 1690, under William and Mary . . . greater despondency, consternation, and general dissatisfaction prevailed throughout the Kingdom . . . total want of enterprise, or of Information on their (the enemy's) part alone saved the Town, as well as the Dock-yards at Plymouth from falling into the Enemy's possession."—Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs*, i. 304–5.

It is not to be supposed that the dreadful humiliations of 1779 had no effect on the stability of Administration.[1] Even the King felt that there must be what he called "an accession of strength." The accession was to be some sort of Coalition—his real meaning being that Opposition must be weakened, not that Administration must be made stronger. The King's conduct throughout is a striking example of how an overweening desire to dominate can blind a man to his real interests. George III was so bent on being the ruler of his Empire that he ran great risk of having no empire left to rule. As long as his Ministers were subservient he passed over everything—neglect, incompetence, immorality; if they were not subservient, no abilities, no virtues could atone. Moral himself even to rigidity, he did not wince at Sandwich's notoriously evil life; he saw him neglecting the Navy for years together—he saw his best Admirals return inglorious and angry at being sent out with an inferior force,

[1] As an instance of the general alarm, a congregation, assembled for divine service near the coast, was thrown into the greatest perturbation by a voice exclaiming that the French had landed. Male and female leaped over the pews, and rushed out with loud cries, leaving the church wholly deserted, except by the minister (for the clerk, too, had fled) and a few of the military, who remained by command of the General of the district, who happened to be present on the occasion. (The General was Sir R. Sloper.)—*Life of Keppel.*

sometimes when there were ships lying idle in the Downs. He came at last to find the great commands of the Navy going a-begging, because one experienced officer after another respectfully but firmly declined to fight his country's battles while the Earl of Sandwich ruled at the Admiralty. He saw Germaine making foolish plans, which he did not even take the trouble to communicate to the officers who were to carry them out. There have been Kings who would have sent Germaine to the Tower. But George III clung to the men who disgraced his arms, and reserved his wrath for the men who denounced them.

North was not so blind. From his own admission we know that ever since 1776 he felt the utmost uneasiness—that he knew "nothing could be so weak as the Government," that nothing was done, that "there was no discipline in army or navy, or state," and that "impending ruin must be the consequence of the present system of government." And though he had not the moral courage to refuse to be art or part of that system any longer, he was always beseeching the King to allow him to shuffle out, and leave the bad business to somebody else. As time went on he became more and more uneasy—even terrified at the calamities he foresaw. All through the summer of 1779 he was trying to go, and the King was forcing him to stay. With all the strength of his half-insane obstinacy, George III clung to the Minister whom he could compel to continue the war. No man, he said, should come into office till he had signed a promise to "keep the Empire entire," to withdraw no troops from America, nor "allow any independence." One by one he tampered with members of Opposition. He won over every man open to any kind of bribe. His one fear was that he might be compelled to accept Rockingham once more. At last, when he had quarrelled with two great Powers, in addition to his rebellious colonists, he sent underground offers even to Rockingham—he would have a Broad Bottom Administration—he would keep out North if that must be—he would form a Ministry on "a more enlarged scale," if only "the present just and unprovoked war" might be kept up. Knowing that Rockingham distrusted him, he condescended to say (untruly) that he really meant a Coalition, and "not to draw him in to support the present Ministry." That present Ministry was as incompetent as it was unscrupulous and subservient, but the King was satisfied with it—he wanted men who would obey him, no matter then whether they could defend the country from the French fleet or not. If he had turned upon them when

the Allied Fleets were stretching from Ushant to the Scilly Isles, blocking up the Channel, when Sir Charles Hardy was trying to give them the slip—for he could not possibly fight them—and when rich convoys were hiding in Irish harbours—if then, the King had turned upon his Ministers and told them he would have capable servants or none, the country would have rallied to him as one man. But through it all, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that George III was as much afraid of having to take Rockingham back as he was of a French invasion. Had not one of his precious Ministers said that an invasion would be an affair of little consequence?

It may well be imagined that the November session of 1779 was a very angry one. The wonder is that the Cabinet survived—it did so only because everybody, from the King downward, knew that any other Ministry would instantly make peace with America. North's own nerve—never very firm—had failed, and he was always imploring to resign. His speeches had become pitiful apologies. He had found, not made the situation—it would be dishonourable to run away when things went ill—gentlemen now in Opposition had approved of many of the measures they now condemned. A few changes were made just before Parliament met. Suffolk had died in March, and Weymouth for some months held both the Northern and Southern Seals—he now resigned both; Stormont had the Northern, and Hillsborough the Southern. The office of First Lord of Trade and Plantations was revived, and given to Carlisle. Thurlow was Chancellor; Bathurst President of the Council. But these changes made no difference—they were not even "palliations."

It was now tacitly acknowledged that some sort of overtures had been made to Chatham in the last months of his life. Opposition incorporated the closing words of his refusal in their Amendment to the Address,[1] and proposed to tell his Majesty that nothing could save the country but "*new councils and new councillors, a real change, not a mere palliation.*"

The dangerous state of Ireland (called in the King's Speech, "my loyal and faithful kingdom"), and the defenceless state of England, filled the speeches of Opposition. Rockingham told the Lords what he himself saw at Hull, in September, when Paul Jones appeared off the town. The town had "perfectly trusted the assurances of Administration," that the armed sloops, *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough*, would be able to defeat

[1] November 25, 1779.

and capture Jones and his squadron. Jones, at the mouth of the Humber, might have run up in one tide, and laid the town in ashes, but they did not seem to realise this, till, in the evening, news came that the *Serapis* and *Scarborough* were engaged with Jones—then that both ships were taken. Then, in a great fright, the Mayor called a meeting, and sent for Rockingham, who had already been looking into the defences, and had found that there was not a single gun in the town mounted—few of the guns were fit for service, and there were no carriages. Earlier in the day Rockingham had tried in vain to persuade the Town Council to take the guns out of the ships, and mount a battery—they had said they must ask consent of Government. But now, when he proposed to take the twenty 18-pounders out of a ship in harbour, it was done. Meanwhile Jones had got off with two English ships of war! Then he referred to the poor defences of Plymouth, where the guns did not fit the balls, and the balls did not fit the guns, and there were no handspikes, nor wadding, nor rammers, nor anything else necessary for serving, and only about thirty old men for gunners. And the combined fleets of France and Spain off the Sound! As long ago as before the French Treaty was known, the unprotected state of Plymouth was represented to Ministers.

All the reply Rockingham had was, that there are 500 seamen in Plymouth, every one of whom understands guns.

Richmond attacked the Commander-in-Chief, telling him to his face that he had been appointed that he might make promotions agreeable to Ministers, and pass over deserving officers. Amherst made a miserable reply, more damaging then the accusation. When he went down to Plymouth, to see the land-defences, it was not expected the whole defence of Plymouth would rest upon the land. It was true that if Plymouth was attacked by land, the military force was not sufficient to man all the works—that would take 10,000 men, and only 5000 could be spared for it. If the calibres did not fit the balls, or the balls the calibres, that was not to be attributed to him—he gave "general directions for proper measures to be taken, and if they were not, it was not his fault." Richmond replied that there were nearly 100,000 men in arms in the country, including militia and fencibles, and yet 5000 could not be spared to defend the frontier fortress, the second naval arsenal of the kingdom, with five million worth of stores!

At last Sandwich rose. He would cheerfully resign[1] if he thought it would get the country out of its difficulties. As for officers refusing to serve under his administration, he was certain the noble Duke had been misinformed, for one of these (Admiral Barrington) had offered his services that very morning—he did not know whether they would be accepted, but at any rate it showed the noble Duke was wrong in one instance. He stood to what had fallen from him in a debate some years back—we ought to have a fleet equal to cope with the united force of the House of Bourbon. It was said that Sir Charles Hardy had had to run away—Sandwich would never let that pass without contradiction—Sir Charles "retired unmolested," on discovering "the vast apparent superiority of the enemy." Only consider the risk he would have run in case of a defeat! The fate of the country might depend upon it. But the fact was, the combined fleet had made a paltry figure —they came into the Channel, and "went off in a precipitate manner." He owned our fleet was greatly inferior in numbers, but then it was greater in efficient strength. And as for there being only 36 gunners in Plymouth, there were 500 seamen who all knew how to handle artillery.[2]

Lord Chancellor Thurlow could not think why the Amendment asked for new councils—all he could see was, that certain measures were condemned because they were unsuccessful. It was very wrong to bring an accusation without asking what the party had to say in extenuation. And so on—every word he uttered showing how well he did see what the Amendment meant. He admitted that it said truly that the country was in a very prosperous state at his Majesty's accession, and is now in a most dangerous and calamitous state—no man can deny that. But it does not follow that it is the fault of any one set of men. Mr. Grenville brought in the Stamp Act, and raised the question of taxing America—he would not say he was wrong. The noble Marquess who moved the Amendment repealed that Act—he would give no opinion on that either. The noble Duke's (Grafton) Administration brought in the Revenue Act, which sowed the seeds of the present

[1] Several others had now resigned.

[2] "For God's sake go to sea without delay. You cannot conceive of what importance it is to yourself, to me, and to the public, that you should not lose this fair wind; if you do, I shall not only hear of it in Parliament, but in places to which I pay more attention."—*Sandwich to Rear-Admiral Rodney*, December 8, 1779.

rebellion — he would give no opinion on that either. The present Administration had only succeeded to all this.

They talked till half-past one in the morning before they divided. By 41 to 82 Rockingham's Amendment was lost.

In this debate that strange man Lord Lyttleton made his last speech,[1] and made it on behalf of Ireland. Hillsborough had professed not to know what "a free trade" meant — supposed it meant an "equal trade." Lyttleton asked what was an equal trade? A free trade meant "a free unlimited and uncontrolled trade with any nation under the sun who chose to trade with them." It was true England had an exclusive right to trade to her Colonies, to which Ireland had not a shadow of pretence, but what of that? Ireland, if excluded from the Colonies, would shut her ports to Great Britain, and we shall throw Irish commerce into the hands of foreigners.

Hillsborough replied that an "equal" trade was "the most equitable mode of accommodating the claims and rights and interests of both kingdoms. The way this equality was to be carried into execution was another matter. As for the legality of arming the Irish, if it was illegal, it was necessary — but for "the zeal, ardour, activity, and spirited determination of the inhabitants, France would before now have effected a landing there" — and so by this time we should have had a foreign war carried into the heart of the kingdom.

Lyttleton rose again, and said the point was, that if Ireland was unprotected, it was because the force she paid for "was drawn forth to fight the Quixotic battles of Great Britain, on the other side of the Atlantic" — so it was the fault of Ministers who persisted in that ruinous war. Ministers had stripped Ireland of her natural defence, and left her at the mercy of a set of French and American freebooters. He warned them that the consequence might be "the dire alternative, a total separation of that country from her sister kingdom."

No less was the anger in the Commons, where the same weighty words of Chatham dead were flung at Lord North by Cavendish, who asked whether all we had got for our enormous expenditure was an inferior fleet, a defenceless coast, and an exhausted Treasury? And what was become of the American war

[1] He died on the night of the 27th, in circumstances which have been the occasion of much curious discussion. He is known as "the bad Lord Lyttleton."

—the accursed war, source of all our calamities? The Speech did not so much as mention it. One after another the members of Opposition got up and repeated the old accusations—and many new ones. Plymouth in danger; Dominica, St. Vincent's, Grenada lost. At home, "in fairs and markets little business transacted"; merchants afraid to trust their property on the sea with the Channel covered by the fleet of France. The lower orders out of work, "or half-idle"; the value of land fallen—sometimes to one half. Then Ireland—her distresses are ours, for if she is shut out from trade she cannot support her establishments. The people used to look to Parliaments for redress—now they dread their meeting as much as they once desired it. The Commons only meet now to lay new burdens, to devise some new-fangled tax, to draw its last farthing from wretchedness. The awful moment is approaching when they must deliver to the people the trust they received from them. Have you thought of the account you have to render? Will you tell your constituents for what purpose you have voted additional taxes on a people already groaning under a debt not much short of 150 millions sterling? And when this year's expenditure is added it will be nearly 200 millions!

At this moment William Adam[1] (member for Gatton in Surrey) "apprized the House of his intention to abandon the minority, and vote with Administration" on the present question. He wished to state his reasons. Unconnected with any party, he knew nothing about anybody's measures or plans—he protested he never heard the Speech or the Address till they were read in that House. He was enlisted under neither banner, and so could speak the sentiments of his heart. These sentiments were curious. Last session he thought our want of success in the field was entirely due to want of stability in our councils—he blamed the Cabinet. But the Enquiry had convinced him that "the fluctuating, divided state of the Cabinet had not been felt in America"—though operations "there appeared to have been conducted as if these divisions were well known." This, of course, led him to discover that Ministers were not solely to blame; and so it seemed unjust to ascribe to Ministers the unskilful conduct of the American war. To remove them all would be personally injurious to them as individuals, and—what was worse—highly prejudicial to the State, for some of them were acknowledged to possess abilities

[1] Adam was probably bidding for the Paymastership of the Ordnance, which he got next year. He was one of the four brothers Adam, who owned the "Adelphi."

adequate to saving their country, and they enjoyed a great share of public confidence. ["A violent and loud cry of Name them! name them!"] "When the tumult had subsided" Adam named the Chancellor—there was also Lord Stormont. But his chief reason against a change was that Opposition, if they came in, would make a dishonourable and humiliating peace with "our revolted subjects in America." Better, therefore, make "one struggle more even under the present ministers," than remove them for others who would dismember the Empire. And he did not think our situation nearly as dangerous as it had been in former times—for instance, in 1690, when we had been beaten twice at sea, and the French had sunk seven ships of the line, and burnt a town, and our Admiral had to fly for the river, and pull up the buoys and sea-marks to evade pursuit, and take shelter in the Thames and Medway; when Ireland was in open rebellion, and half the people of this country were "scantily abetting the cause of the exiled king." Why should we have new councils, new councillors? Because the old had been unsuccessful? Surely the unsuccessful Ministers of 1779 might hereafter be as fortunate as the unsuccessful Ministers of 1690? Then, the English flag "recovered its lustre" in two years, and so may it now—though it is not disgraced.

After this extraordinary speech, Townshend said there must be treachery—mere inability could not reduce us to the state we were in. The history of last summer was an indelible disgrace—we had abandoned the Channel, and Sir Charles Hardy, a brave and experienced Admiral, had been compelled to shun the enemy, and let him ride unmolested in sight of our coasts. He knew several gentlemen, whom he saw in the House, who could bear witness that if the French had landed Plymouth would now be in ashes—it could have made no resistance. Our West India Islands were naked and defenceless, our trade in the Mediterranean annihilated, Gibraltar besieged—and we have not been able to send it the least relief. Our affairs are in so calamitous a state that Ministers, "the authors of our misfortunes," are the first objects of our execration, and no man who does not wish to share their punishment should offer himself as a candidate for their friendship. "But of late years, a most dangerous doctrine had gone forth, that the king was his own minister, his own admiral in chief, his own general, his own secretary, his own president of the council, his own financier." So his Majesty was made the shield of his Ministers, and the failure of every measure is laid at the door of the Sovereign—and as, by the Constitution, he can do no

wrong, nobody is responsible. Townshend ended by saying that we had not a single ally, "from the confines of Siberia to the streights of Gibraltar, from Norway to the Hellespont." France, Spain, "and the greater part of Italy," were leagued against us, almost every other Power was "hostilely inclined," and the two or three others "lukewarm and indifferent."

Minchin rose to confirm that Plymouth could not have resisted—he was there when the French appeared. "We would have met them with the spirit of Englishmen, but sure I am that to a man we must have perished."

Lord George Gordon now made one of his most characteristic speeches—a strange mixture of sense and fanaticism. He began about Ireland. Ministers are as odious there as in England. (To prove it he read from a newspaper an account of the debates in the Irish Parliament.) The Irish think they are oppressed. Their grievances have become so intolerable that they are insisting on a free trade. But if this was to be granted, he hoped the noble lord in the blue ribbon would "give him timely notice," that he might write down to Scotland "to give his countrymen warning to establish an India company of their own." The people in Scotland were as ready to "break with the minister" as in Ireland. "The indulgencies given to papists had alarmed the whole country," and they were determined to guard against a people that were become such favourites in the eyes of the Ministry. He did not speak his own sentiments only; Government should find 120,000 men at his back. They have sent petitions, which have been disregarded by the Lord Chancellor. "You, Mr. Speaker, have incurred the displeasure of the people by not delivering them to the Commons." Now they have printed their sentiments, and I am to deliver them to the King and the Prince of Wales, "that they may learn upon what terms the Scotch will be governed by them." The coast of Scotland is left naked and defenceless—to my certain knowledge, Paul Jones might have destroyed Glasgow, Leith, Greenock, and Edinburgh, at the same time. "I will read you the letter, Mr. Speaker, from the Secretary at War to the Duke of Queensferry and Lord Stormont, on the subject." When he had done so, "he darted a look at the Secretary at War, and stretching out his arm, he suddenly exclaimed, And you, Charles Jenkinson, how dare you write such a letter! Robert Bruce would not have dared to write such a one: and yet the secretary of an Elector of Hanover has had the presumption to do it; the royal family of Stuart has been banished for not attending to the voice of their

people, and yet the Elector of Hanover is not afraid to disregard it!" It was the refusal to arm Scotland which had infuriated Gordon. "Sir Hugh Smithson, Earl Percy, armed cap-a-pee, marches at the head of all the cheesemongers and grocers from Temple-Bar to Brentford, and the great Earl Douglas of Scotland is not to be entrusted with arms! The Scotch are irritated at this partiality, and in point of religion they are exasperated, as they are convinced in their own mind that the King is a papist." Here the Speaker stopped him.

North made a long, miserable, hair-splitting, quibbling defence. It was the fault of the other Powers if France and Spain were allowed to make such head against us—if they had attacked a Continental Power, we should have been called on to help, but no one helped us, so it can't be wondered that they outnumber us. After all, Sir Charles Hardy did keep them in check, and our merchant fleet has got through. Why did we allow the junction of the French and Spanish fleets? Because the French put to sea before they were ready, and we waited till we were ready. "This could not have been foreseen, and consequently could not be prevented." Then Plymouth—if we did not do more at once, it was because we knew d'Orvilliers did not mean to land there, but somewhere else. We are now prepared at all points—we can defy the most formidable attacks. Then Ireland—she does need help, and we give her all we can without materially injuring ourselves—she can't in reason ask more than that. We did not lay these restraints on her trade—it was done in the reigns of Charles II and William III. Ireland's dependence on England was to her own advantage—if she shook it off, it would indeed injure England, "but would be the destruction of Ireland." And he was sure the countries loved each other with "sisterly affection." And Scotland had given too many proofs of loyalty for him to doubt her disposition.

Admiral Keppel rose to deny indignantly that Sir Charles Hardy had saved the merchant fleet. It was false! It was an imposition! The language of the noble lord "was not the language of a seaman, or of any person who conversed with seamen." No seaman could bear to listen to it without contradicting it. It was the language of a landman, "and that landman was the Earl of Sandwich." It was Providence alone that saved Plymouth and the merchant fleet—the wind was never far enough to the eastward for d'Orvilliers to make the attempt safely; that same wind forced them out of the Channel to sea. The merchant fleet was saved by "the strong easterly

wind" which kept back the transports till the French were gone. Sir Charles Hardy had to run away. The noble lord said he only went home for reinforcements—two "rotten ships," the *Arrogant*, "one of Sir Edward Hawke's rotten ships," and the *Blenheim*, "whose bottom was so foul" that she had been obliged to go into dock for repairs. He could not account for Sir Charles' going to sea a second time under the direction of the men who had made him run away. If he had been in Sir Charles' situation, he would have said to Ministers, "I will never run away to oblige you again!" To show the ignorance of Administration, the fleet was kept at sea at this dangerous season of the year, when it ran the risk of being shattered and dispersed by storms—all for "empty parade," for the enemy had been laid up for weeks safe in port. How are we to meet them next year? They will have at least eight more ships, and the Spaniards four—twelve more than now, and some of them "of the first magnitude," while we shall not have more than half as many new ships.

Now Fox rose, and fell upon Adam. At the beginning of last session Adam thought Ministers wrong, but the operations of the last campaign made him think them right! When he finds their conduct more disgraceful, more infamous, more ruinous than he supposed, he determines to support them! He commends Administration by saying there are men more incapable still among those who aspire to their places—this is to say to a Minister, "Sir, I cannot defend you on the ground of your own conduct, it is so replete with blunders, but I will tell you what I will do to serve you: I will inform the world that the men who oppose you are more ignorant, more inconsistent, more infamous and more disgraceful than yourself." For his part, he would reply, "Begone, wretch! you pretend to defend me by saying to my face that I am certainly infamous, but others are more so."[1] He then asked what was become of the American war? It only existed to swell accounts; 60,000 men were mouldering away in inactivity at New York. If Clinton had an army of Americans greater in number than Washington's whole force, how was this inactivity to be accounted for? And why were 3000 men sent out with Admiral Arbuthnot, to rein-

[1] Adam sent Fox a challenge in consequence of this speech. They met in Hyde Park on the 29th, and exchanged two shots at fourteen paces. Fox was slightly wounded at the first shot, but still refusing to retract, they went on. Fox fired in the air, after which he said he had not intended a personal affront to Adam.

force an inactive army, already sufficiently numerous, if Ministers are to be believed, when that force might have saved our West India Islands from d'Estaing? He compared George III to Henry VI—each was an amiable and pious prince who lost all that an heroic father and grandfather had gained. "*The House of Brunswick ought never to forget for one moment that their claim to the throne was founded on the delinquency of the Stuart family.*"

Dundas said he was totally ignorant whether Fox's accusations against the Ministry were well-founded—he had (like many other gentlemen) spent part of the summer and autumn far distant from the capital, and so could not decide on "the great variety of complicated facts" relied on by Opposition. He had had "a pre-sentiment" that such efforts would be made "to impede government," and so he had come back to support it. He talked about "conversations held in particular places not named, by particular persons not known—"vague, extravagant, and unascertained language, collected in streets and coffee-houses," or "fabricated for particular purposes, by the Lord knows whom, and the Lord knows where." "Strange stories," "improbable anecdotes"—no such conversations had ever reached his own ear. He knew no responsible person who ever said "the King was his own minister." He could not pretend to say upon whom the responsibility of the army lay—his right hon. friend the Secretary at War, he would venture to promise, would explain. As to the affairs of Ireland, he did not consider them so alarming as Mr. Fox thought. "Ireland was known to be in imminent distress," and should in his opinion be relieved. This was "a liberal age," and England, he was certain, would grant all Ireland could reasonably expect—he was equally sure Ireland would ask nothing "improper for England to grant." Then came a good deal about the "veteran admiral" whom we had seen with 38 sail of the line keep 66 sail of the enemy "collected together for several months and occupy their whole time." Our trade came safe home from every quarter of the world, and, with "so inferior a fleet," have we not defeated the enemy's "grand and boasted purposes of an invasion"?

Burke (who was so hoarse that he sat down once or twice, but was unanimously called on to speak) urged attention to Ireland. The situation there "was tremendous." The people were "irritated by disappointment" and promises only made to be broken—hence the late alarming riot in Dublin. After Jenkinson had denied that he ever heard anyone say the King

was his own Minister, and had deprecated all this praise of the late King, whose reign "furnished us with many instances of misfortunes and misconduct"; and the Attorney-General had said that if the Commons had it all their own way, they would "encircle the King, like a spider's web, with a ministry of their own choosing, and reduce us to the lowest state of anarchy and confusion"; Temple Luttrell said, though it was then eleven o'clock, he was determined not to give a silent vote—rather would he sit there till the same hour next day. He recapitulated our misfortunes—the Portugal trade blocked up all summer, the Mediterranean and Levant trade utterly gone, the Newfoundland fishery "nearly demolished," the East India trade taking refuge in the Shannon, for ten weeks, "in constant terror,"—all the rest escaping by the skin of their teeth—if they have escaped. Then our losses in the West Indies, the danger of our coasts—"the entrance by the Needles to the Isle of Wight free to d'Orvilliers." Was even London safe? True the new Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Bamber Gascoyne) was drawing a ponderous chain across the Thames, and a learned gentleman (Dundas) had cried out, Where are the enemy now? Ministers always tell us they act "to the best of their understandings." He went over all that had happened since Spain declared war, to show what their understandings were worth. The Speech and the Address hand us over to Providence—Providence is to be our General, Admiral, Secretary of State, and President of our Councils—also our foreign ally, "the only ally we have a chance of." "But, Sir, Ministers have an understanding—and it is one that passeth common knowledge—I mean a good understanding with a venal majority." He then appealed to the minority to "secede in a body from these polluted walls, and convene the several counties, to take instructions and collect the real sense of our constituents, during the Christmas recess." Have we not yet had enough of the baleful policy of the three northern oracles of the long robe?—the Chief Justice of the King's Bench (Mansfield), the Lord Advocate of Scotland (Dundas), and Mr. Attorney-General. Taxation or starvation! cries one (Dundas); Let loose the Indians! says another (Wedderburn), and set the negroes to butcher their masters. "The Rubicon" is the language of the third. The better part of your dependencies abroad are already gone, one half your dominions at home in a ferment little short of open revolt, the other half disunited, desponding, ready to sink under taxes, "devoured by the insatiable appetite of the war." Then look at the dismal catalogue of accidents in the

naval diary of last Monday—in Anson's time the whole account of ships foundering at sea "would fall short of one summer's catastrophe in these our days." Are the elements more violent? Or are our ships of a worse sort? With a list on paper of near 100 sail of the line, we never have 75 fit for service. For three and a half millions sterling we might have had the whole British Navy built from the keel and fitted for sea—we have paid more than that for "preserving and augmenting" the fleet. Then he spoke of North's "political hysterics"—he had seen his laughing fit, the crying fit would come next, but "a whole Atlantic of tears" would not suffice to blot out the noble lord's Administration from the annals of George III.

The House rejected the Amendment by 233 to 134.

CHAPTER LXXXV

IRELAND

"The people of Ireland have been uniformly plundered and oppressed."—Junius, *Letter to the King*.

"The only gleam of prosperity which ever visited unhappy Ireland, she owed to the American war."—Macknight's *Burke*.

"Friends and Fellow Subjects . . . it was with the utmost reluctance we could prevail upon ourselves to cease our commercial connection with your island.—*Your* Parliament had done us no wrong.—*You* had ever been friendly to the rights of mankind.

"We know that you are not without your grievances.—We sympathise with you in your distress, and are pleased to find that the design of subjugating us, has persuaded Administration to dispense to Ireland some vagrant rays of ministerial sunshine."—CONGRESS to the PEOPLE of IRELAND, July 28, 1775.

MINISTERS were placed in a great dilemma with regard to Ireland. There was now a most real and imminent danger of invasion—somewhere, and if Ireland were known to be exasperated, there was the greatest reason to fear that Ireland might be the place selected. With the flower of our armies gone to "reduce" America, it was equally impossible to face a rebellion in Ireland, or to repulse a French invasion of Ireland without Ireland's help. For centuries the interests of Ireland had been sacrificed to those of England without any attempt at concealment—we should as soon have thought of considering the interest of the horse when put in the balance with that of his rider, as of considering the interests of Irish trade where English trade seemed to be concerned. Only "seemed," because our restrictions on the trade of Ireland ruined her, but did not produce the expected benefit to ourselves. And now this whole system was beginning to crack under the pressure from without caused by a great foreign war. It had become absolutely necessary to keep Ireland in tolerable humour, for it had become absolutely necessary to permit Ireland to arm. It was impossible to tell the Irish they must sit still and watch the French land![1]

[1] On May 23, 1775, the Bishop of Derry, writing to Lord Dartmouth, had ascribed "the rebellious spirit" in the central provinces of America to the

In other ways, the age-long system of English government in Ireland had at last begun to react upon ourselves. There is a point at which the sacrifice of our neighbour's interests to our own ceases to be profitable. That limit was now reached with regard to Ireland. Ministers had staved off the day of reckoning, quieting the Irish with promises, and the English with denials of fact; but to this too there is an end at last. The combination of a war with America, France, and Spain, had brought about a situation which even a North Ministry could not entirely ignore. The restrictions on Irish trade had culminated in the Embargo of 1776, which forbade the exportation of the great staple commodities, beef and butter, at the same time that the linen trade was suffering exceedingly from the American war. It was supposed that by cutting off Irish beef and butter we should seriously embarrass the French, but all we did was to give the trade to Germany and the other countries with a Baltic sea-board. These countries were making great efforts, and though their salt beef was not as good as the Irish, they were rapidly gaining a market in France. And it was said that the Embargo was never anything but a job, to benefit a few of those favourite contractors who cried, "Feed! feed!" and had not even the saving grace of being intended to benefit the whole country.

It was beginning to dawn on the Government that one day or other peace must be restored with America, and that then, if the Irish were too intolerably miserable at home, they might emigrate to the Colonies. Even if we should have re-established our supremacy, it would not be desirable to flood America with "fanatic and hungry republicans"—they might join in some future dispute! Another reason for not totally destroying Ireland, was that she was a customer of England, and we had sensibly felt the falling off in Irish trade. There were some who said that the interferences with trade were not the only—were hardly the chief causes of Ireland's misery—that the enormous number of absentee place-men and pensioners drained the life-blood of the country even more disastrously than the trade restrictions crippled her energies. Whatever the cause, it was certain that Ireland was one of the poorest and most miserable countries on the face of the earth.

exportation from Ireland of nearly 33,000 "fanatical and hungry republicans" in the course of a few years. He regrets that his own brethren have not "laid the foundation of an exclusive cultivation of the island"—apparently grudging the Irish even such land as had been left them. He attributes the growth of "Republicanism and Dissention," however, to the non-residence of the Clergy. —*Hist. MSS. Report XIV*, App. 10, p. 303.

Some said that Ireland was no more miserable than we were ourselves—and not much more likely to rebel under her miseries. We had better, therefore, stick to such advantages as yet remained to us, and leave Ireland to do the best she could. A motion was made on March 10 to repeal those clauses in the Navigation Act which ordered all sugar ships to bring their cargoes to England, and re-export them thence to Ireland—thus securing the duty. It was carried by five votes; but a few days later, on some clamour from those who thought we should look to ourselves, North changed his mind, and on the 18th the motion was rejected by four votes. All this was immediately known in Ireland, and increased the uneasiness already excited by the principle of taxation without representation—it might soon be applied to Ireland!

Associations began to be formed to use no British manufactures. What is done by Americans can be done by Irishmen. The Irish thought they would thus save a million sterling, which now went to Britain—to say nothing of pulling down the pride and ingratitude of Manchester and Glasgow, towns which had gained so much by Ireland in the past, and were now the foremost to protest against her miseries being relieved.

Ireland's own military force had been sent to America. Then came the war with France, and the talk of invasion. The Associations became military,[1] and the people did not conceal that their intentions did not stop short at saving Ireland to the British Crown—they also meant to defend the rights of Ireland. Soon, 40,000 Irish Volunteers were in arms, and in the present state of affairs, what could be said to them? It was impossible to forbid them to resist a French landing! Government made a virtue of necessity, and gave out arms—though fewer than were required.

And now it was impossible to keep up the Penal Laws any longer. The Irish Parliament imitated the British in repealing the most abominable of them, and the Irish began to feel no longer a horde of outlaws, but a nation. On October 12, 1779, the Parliament of Ireland had declared, in the Address to the Throne, that nothing less than "a free and unlimited trade" could save Ireland from ruin. The Addresses were carried up between ranks of the Dublin Volunteers, commanded by the Duke of Leinster. As there was reason to fear that once more time

[1] During these debates, Burke said, uncontradicted, that there were 11,000 land-forces under arms in Ireland, "without any kind of subordination upon Government."

would be gained by fair and empty promises, and that Parliament would be prorogued, a new expedient was resorted to. It had been customary for Ireland to grant supplies for two years at once—a convenient arrangement, which much shortened the period during which a Parliament need sit. This time they were granted for only six months, by which simple device Parliament was guaranteed against untimely prorogation. It now became absolutely necessary to lend an ear to Ireland's distresses.

Shelburne began his great speech[1] by saying he did not know on which subject to address their lordships first—Ireland or Jamaica. But Jamaica was far off, and perhaps lost already—Ireland was near, and might be saved. He reminded them how long they had been promising to do something, and had put it off. And now Ireland had armed herself. The 40,000 Volunteers were not mercenaries, but the nobility, gentry, merchants, citizens and yeomanry of Ireland—Church of England men and Catholics; Dissenters and Sectaries; Whigs and Tories; place-men, pensioners, and country gentlemen; Englishmen by birth—in short, every man in and out of the Irish Parliament, with only one dissenting voice. A noble lord (Hillsborough) thought the Irish did not know what they meant by a free trade. It meant an unrestrained trade to every part of the world, independent of the control of the British legislature. It was not speculative—he had been informed that a trade was opened between the north of Ireland and North America, with the privity of Congress; and Dr. Franklin had been empowered to treat with Ireland on commercial regulations. Shelburne said much about "double influence," and "secret advisers." The conduct of Edward II and Richard II showed how a prince could forget his dignity under the influence of secret advice. Since the beginning of the present reign we had departed from the system which had "brought us through four most heavy and expensive wars," and raised us to the highest pinnacle of fame; and in its place we had adopted a system "planned in secret advice and supported by corruption."

By 82 to 37 the Lords agreed with Stormont that no part of the charges against Administration had been proved.

On December 6 the same motion was moved in the

[1] On his motion of Censure against Ministers for their Conduct towards Ireland, December 1, 1779.

Commons by the Earl of Upper-Ossory. Ministers, he said, had abandoned the affairs of Ireland to chance. They neither felt for her distresses, nor provided against her natural resentments. Forty-two thousand men were at that instant in arms in Ireland — not only to protect the country from a foreign enemy, but to support the demands of their representatives in Parliament. They asked for "a free trade"—and several very respectable characters in that Parliament had explained this as an intention to trade with the whole world, and to disavow the authority of the British Parliament. Where have Ministers led us? To be forced to agree to everything Ireland may ask, "in her present distempered state," or "the terrible alternative of civil war," while we are fighting France, Spain, and America. He protested that he would never sacrifice the interests of England to those of Ireland, but "the spirit of resistance directed towards independency, which had manifested itself in Ireland, was solely imputable to the shameful inattention of Ministers." The Irish would once have been content with far less than they were entitled to expect. He moved: That it is highly criminal in his Majesty's Ministers to have neglected taking effectual measures for the relief of the kingdom of Ireland.

The debate which followed enables us to understand the miseries of Ireland. Lord Beauchamp—who meant to vote against the motion—said no man could deny Ireland was distressed, but her grievances had not arisen under the present reign. This argument was very common—as though the older a grievance is, the less hard it is to bear. Beauchamp admitted that "the prime source of the distresses of that kingdom was the system of our trade-laws"—but then that could not fairly be imputed to any Ministry, "and least of all to the present." He was himself convinced these restrictions arose "from a very narrow, short-sighted policy, *strengthened by time*," and which after more than a century, "had been wrought, as it were, into the very constitution of the country." There were also strong prejudices to contend with. For his part, he thought Ireland ought to be relieved—but could not pretend to say to what extent. Though he enjoyed a place under the Crown, he did not know what passed in his Majesty's councils, but he had "heard in conversation" that his Majesty's servants had agreed upon Propositions, to be submitted to that House

next Thursday—he thought Ireland would be granted an equal trade.

Burke ridiculed Beauchamp for speaking on both sides of the question—like a certain Irish counsel who was employed by a lady in a suit against her husband, and by the husband against his wife. He then compared the conduct of Ministers towards Ireland with their conduct towards America. A mob in Dublin had wrecked the house of the Attorney-General. Why not shut up the port of Dublin, burn Cork and Waterford, prohibit meetings and destroy popular elections? Because Ministers dare not! He then warned the House not to push Ireland too far, as they had pushed America. "Ireland, for her loyalty for almost a century, and her forbearance under accumulated oppression, has been refused the mighty indulgence of importing her own sugars." Whatever measure served Ireland would in the end serve England.

Dundas candidly confessed he used to oppose every attempt to give the Irish the redress they wished for. He thought in his conscience he was doing his duty. But he was not obstinate, and he had been "converted" some time since by the "solid arguments" of Mr. Burke, and since then could safely affirm had never voted or spoken contrary to the hon. gentleman. He thought Ireland had been hardly treated—but then were Ministers to blame? He appealed to the House whether the sense of it had not been totally averse to give Ireland any substantial or effectual relief? "The House was not in a temper or disposition to attend to the subject." He thought the motion ill-founded. What was the great grievance Ireland complained of? Restrictions on her trade, by Acts passed by the British Parliament from the 12th of Charles II to the present reign—he thought there were none since his Majesty's accession—at any rate none since the present Ministry came into power. In fact, they had "enlarged" trade, and done more for the Irish than has been done by all the Adminstrations of this country, since the Revolution! They have given bounties on the Newfoundland fishery; the cultivation of hemp and tobacco; have permitted the exportation of Irish woollens for the troops serving out of the kingdom; and the export of several articles to the West Indies and the coast of Africa. Gentlemen complain of the prorogation last July, or say Parliament ought to have reassembled before the Irish

Parliament was called. But the situation of this country during July, August, and September was such that Parliament could not have sat without great risk and "infinite inconvenience"—so many of us hold commissions in the militia. He concluded by exhorting gentlemen not to indulge in inflammatory speeches. Ireland would no doubt receive full satisfaction—those are her best friends who gave her her due and nothing more—let us come to it with coolness and temper.

Fox rose to reply. It was his first appearance since the duel with Adam. He was very warm about the "inflammatory speeches"—the learned gentleman was the last who should arraign gentlemen on the other side of the House for using inflammatory speeches—he whose inflammatory harangues had led the nation, step by step, from violence to violence—who had dealt in nothing but exaggeration, in incitements to revenge—he who called the Americans "Hancock and his crew!" Why does he not now say "Perry[1] and his crew"? Is it because Perry and his crew have used such convincing arguments? The arguments of Perry and his crew are 42,000 bayonets!

Dundas had said the complaints originated in England and were sent over to Ireland. Then were there no distresses in Ireland? No men of understanding? Were Mr. Sergeant Burgh and Mr. Grattan governed by what happened in the English Parliament?

Then Fox traced all our evils to their "grand source," the American war. That accursed war had led us into our present misfortunes. What had wasted 40 millons of money and 60,000 lives? The American war. What had produced the French Rescript and a French war? The American war. What had produced the Spanish Manifesto and a Spanish war? The American war. What had armed 42,000 men in Ireland? The American war. What was about to make us incur an additional debt of 12 or 14 millions? That "accursed, diabolical, cruel American war!"

A very singular episode occurred when Fox sat down. Archibald Macdonald, a supporter of the Ministry, rose and said he should vote against the motion, because, though he believed that Ministers were highly criminal, yet "as a member of Parliament" he could not give a vote without proof—and there was no proof. Then he "made one of the severest attacks upon the Minister in his personal character, that was ever known in a House of Parliament."

[1] Speaker of the Irish House of Commons.

He called North "lazy, indolent, incapable; evasive, shuffling, cutting, and deceptious." He said he was "plausible and artful, mean, insolent, confident, and cowardly; a poor, pitiful, sneaking, snivelling, abject creature, fraught with deceit, whom no man of honour could trust as a minister or an individual!"

To this North very naturally replied that he wondered the hon. gentleman had always supported him, if he deserved these scurrilous epithets—perhaps he did, but it was strange the hon. gentleman had not found it out before. He did not recollect ever giving the hon. gentleman just cause of offence—if he had, it was unintentional. He would, however, tell him that he "disregarded his friendship and despised his approbation." He only remembered snivelling once, and that was a family affair, and a particular family misfortune gave rise to the weakness.[1] He then went off on the old tack—he was not to blame, and if he was incapable, he was ready to resign the instant a successor was found "whom the Sovereign and Parliament might think more fit."

At half an hour after midnight the House divided against the motion.[2]

But though the united eloquence of Burke and Fox failed to obtain a Vote of Censure, and though Ministers professed to feel quite easy as to Ireland, North brought in a Bill on the 13th of December to repeal an important part of the prohibitions.[3] His speech is a terrible indictment of England's dealings. He showed how the whole woollen trade of Ireland was put an end to by the 10th and 11th William III, and how subsequent Acts had swept away the few articles excepted from these Acts of William. Hardly any article from any British colony but must first be landed in Great Britain. The first two clauses of the Bill were at once agreed to, and received the Royal assent before Parliament rose for Christmas. The third—regarding trade to colonies—was to stand over for more consideration, and to see what Ireland thought of it.

Next day (December 8) Mr. Macdonald "apologized to Lord North for some hasty expressions which had fallen from him on the 6th." He would now affirm they "were totally ill-founded, and in his cooler moments were directly contrary to his real

[1] See p. 741.

[2] The numbers were, 100, 192.

[3] The laws prohibiting the exportation of Irish woollen manufactures to any part of Europe; so much of the 19th George II as prohibited the importation into Ireland of any glass not made in England, or to export glass; and to allow Ireland to carry on an export and import trade with the British Colonies in America, and the West Indies, and the settlements on the coasts of Africa.

opinion"—it was "a natural infirmity" which sometimes suddenly hurried him beyond the limits of his own judgment. He begged pardon of the House if any indecent expression had escaped him. North called this a very handsome apology, and only wished he had known of it, that he might have come prepared. Unprepared as he was, he gave the fullest credit to what the hon. gentleman had said. He too begged pardon of the House if *he* had said anything to give offence. So all was forgotten and forgiven.[1] And then the Army Estimates came on, and Mr. Secretary at War rose to fulfil the promise Dundas had made for him, as to who was responsible for the Army—so far at least as asking for the money. Jenkinson began rather indiscreetly, by excusing his application for so large a force on the ground of "the inferiority of our fleet," and its "consequent inability to execute the various and very extensive services which in former wars had been derived from that establishment." This was flatly contradicting Sandwich, who was always protesting that the Navy had never been so formidable as now. Jenkinson then gave the number of British troops last year as 96,000—this year they were to be 111,000. Foreign troops were 24,000—will be nearly the same this. In America and the West Indies there were 77,000—of which 21,000 were foreign.

In his motion of December 7, 1779, "for an Economical Reform of the Civil Lists Establishment," the Duke of Richmond once more complained of the amazing increase in expenditure, and the ruinous contest we were engaged in. With the new levies (20,000 men) we should have nearly 300,000 in sea and land forces—of these 70,000 in North America and 12,000 in the West Indies were acting on the defensive. Shelburne denounced the way that contracts were now managed. He went into this more fully on the 15th, on his motion for checking and controlling Army Extraordinaries. He compared the past with the present. In 1762, the most expensive year of the most expensive and extensive war we had ever made, the whole Extras were not more than two millions. We were then everywhere triumphant; we had 80,000 men fighting in Germany; and armies in North America, the British and French West Indies, the East Indies, Portugal, the coast of France, and Havannah. In our last two "defensive" campaigns we have spent three millions on each! How is it accounted for?

[1] "I am pleased with the majority, though highly incensed at the personal conduct of Mr. Macdonald, whose disappointment at the India House, added to the conduct of his father-in-law, is no excuse for his behaviour."—*The King to Lord North*, December 7, 1779.

By the multiplying of contracts! In the last war there was one contract—with Sir William Baker. He undertook to furnish the army with provisions, delivered on the spot, at 6d. a ration. Now the contract is split up into twelve—that the Minister may oblige twelve of his friends in the House, who support him in the war. The present contract delivers provisions *in Cork* at 6d. a ration—"I can prove that, with freight, insurance, etc., every ration now stands us in 2s." Here is the whole freight and risk taken out of the pockets of the public, and put into that of the Minister's contracting friends. There was Mr. Gordon of Cork—he charged £40,000 for his particular services, which seemed to be the removing of the provisions from the ware- or slaughter-house to the ship or lighter. Having denounced "the whole contracting tribe, he paid a very particular attention to the celebrated contractor, Atkinson."[1] "This favourite of the First Lord of the Treasury" had the following contracts: in 1775, one of £80,000; in 1776, £400,000; in 1777, £600,000; in 1778, £700,000. So in four years he had contracts for £1,700,000! This was the man who furnished the rum at double the real price! A Committee was appointed to enquire into this—of twenty-one who were on it, sixteen were the Minister's confidential friends. But even they could not deny the facts—so they pleaded ignorance in justification. At last the matter was referred to a Committee of respectable London merchants[2]—they disapproved of the contract. The Minister sent back again, "and a third time, he believed, at the request of the favourite contractor," but the Committee was firm. Atkinson refused to submit to this arbitration, and nine months afterwards no step had been taken to compel him to refund. Meanwhile he was given another contract!

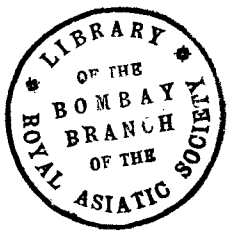
Then there are the Bullion contractors (Alderman Harley), through whose hands have passed £3,700,000 in specie for

[1] Atkinson was a partner of Mure & Son, West India Merchants. He was introduced to North by Robinson. No direct requisition was ever made before for rum by Generals in America. Atkinson's agreement was not made in writing! It was verbal with North. The Treasury never even knew that rum was distributed as part of soldiers' rations till the end of 1777, though in 1775 they had made a contract for 100,000 gallons, and another in 1776 for 500,000. The Treasury Board was buying Jamaica rum in London for the Navy at 2s. 2d. a gallon—half what was paid to Atkinson, who delivered the rum in Jamaica, and so saved the carriage to England. A new office had been created—worthy the acceptance of a field-officer—RUM-TASTER to the Army.—*Facts*, etc.

[2] Long, Neave & Co.

America, and not a single voucher has been produced. "That immense sum was written off in 30 or 40 lines, without specification." When it was remembered that the transport, ordnance, provisions, stores, pay, and appointments, were all separately provided for, "it must puzzle the quickest genius" to guess where this enormous sum of nearly four millions went! He then directly charged upon Government a gigantic system of corruption, by means of these millions expended without account.

The same day Burke said he had a Plan of public Reform and Economy. All our grievances arose from the overgrown power of the Crown. "The worst of public prodigality is, that what is squandered is not simply lost"—it is the source of positive evil. No revenue is large enough for the deserving and the undeserving—for service which is, and service which is not rendered. A Government ought not to be able to go on when it has abused or neglected its duty. Here are men who have lost thirteen colonies sitting undisturbed before you. All enquiry is stifled. His Plan should be presented after the recess.


LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

CHAPTER LXXXVI

THE WAR IS "MODERATELY FED"

"Oh, the folly, the madness, the guilt of having plunged us into this abyss!"—*Walpole to Conway*, June, 1776.

"Nothing in the world can read so awful and so instructive a lesson as the conduct of ministry in this business, upon the mischief of not having large and liberal ideas in the management of great affairs."—*Burke on American Taxation*, April 19, 1774.

THE year 1779 was a pause in the fray on both sides, so far as the quarrel was fought out in America. With the appearance on the scene of France, the seat of war shifted—the chief events now took place in the West Indies. And in India another chapter of the struggle between England and France for the empire of the East was entered on. The Company had many old scores to settle, and did not wait for formalities. As soon as the French Treaty was known, it resolved to act; and on August 8, 1778, General Monroe sat down before Pondicherry. By the 21st the fortress was closely invested. Before that, Admiral Vernon had "beat off" the French squadron in Pondicherry Roads, and on October 17—just as Monroe was preparing for the general assault—the garrison capitulated, and marched out with the honours of war.[1]

In America, although the great ACT OF CONFEDERATION, which became law on November 29, 1778, had given the States a nominal unity, the general government was chaotic. Eleven of the Thirteen States had sent their adhesion, but the Central government was feeble. There were Thirteen Sovereign States and thirteen armies; but Congress was afraid to impose taxes—hence the starvation of the army, and the dragging on of the war. The campaign of 1778 was closed before autumn for want of funds. Congress floundered on through oceans of paper money, which depreciated with each successive loan, till one dollar in hard cash was worth six of paper. By the end of 1778,

[1] *Annual Register.*

Congress owed 141 million dollars. The loyalists said the financial question would wreck the rebellion, and the British Government believed them. Ministers had done their best to help on this providential interference by flooding the States with forged notes—by this time not worth very much less than the genuine ones. All is fair in war—especially when war is rebellion.

Congress could only entreat the separate States to do their duty by the army. In such a condition of affairs but little could be done; but Washington did that little. Just as he was sending Sullivan into the Seneca country, to avenge Wyoming, by breaking up the horde of Indians and Tories under the Butlers, Johnson, and Brant, the officers of a Jersey regiment refused to march, and sent to tell the Provincial Legislature that if they were not paid in three days they might be considered to have resigned. By a mixture of persuasion and reproach, combined with strong remonstrances to the Legislature—Washington got them some money — they consented to march. Sullivan led 3000 men up the west branch of the Susquehanna—there James Clinton joined him with 2000 more. At the battle of Newtown, on August 29, 1779, the combined force of Indians and Tories was easily defeated, and the Indians driven back till they took refuge at Niagara. By this and another expedition from Pittsburg, the terrible Indian incursions were almost stopped, and the British lost their most dreaded weapon.

Sir Henry Clinton had been ordered to confine himself to a predatory warfare (the war was to be only "moderately fed"). In May he sent Sir George Collier and General Matthews to ravage the shores of Chesapeak Bay, whence the American armies were supplied. They destroyed an immense quantity of stores at Suffolk and Portsmouth, and having secured the entrance to the bay flattered themselves that the whole trade of the Chesapeak was at an end, and "with it the seeds of rebellion destroyed."[1]

As soon as Collier returned, Sir Henry Clinton set out with him up the Hudson, with 70 sail and 150 flat-bottomed boats, and 5000 men under General Vaughan, "to clear the coast of Connecticut of the rebels that infested the Sound." He intended to take Verplanck's and Stoney Points, which commanded the river at that part. There were thirty men in one fort and seventy in the other. The seventy surrendered, and Major

[1] General Matthews to Sir G. Collier, Portsmouth, Virginia, May 16, 1779.

André, Sir Henry's aide-de-camp, signed the articles of capitulation. Clinton finished the works of Stoney Point, and fell down the river again. Washington believed his real aim had been West Point, "the guardian fortress of the river," and that these operations were but steps to it. All he could do was to protect West Point — he was not strong enough to attack Clinton.

Sir Henry next sent Tryon on a desultory expedition to ravage the coast of Connecticut. That State furnished the American armies, and was besides a nest of privateers. Tryon landed at New Haven on July 5th. The militia assembled in haste, and made a resolute resistance, but the British captured the town, and destroyed all the vessels in harbour, and the stores—taking great credit for not sacking the town, considering the opposition they had met with. He did not even spare Yale. The Library had been collected during nearly a hundred years. There were many manuscripts, and Berkeley's books, given by him, and called "the Dean's Library." These were carried off to New York, to be sold in taverns.

> "The great Emathion conqueror bid spare
> The house of Pindarus, when temple and tow'r
> Went to the ground."

Tryon next burned the beautiful old village of Fairfield, on the Hudson. Here the Hessians were turned loose, and destroyed some salt-pans, and on their departure left behind copies of a printed address from Collier and Tryon.[1]

From Fairfield, they went to Norwalk, where they burned or destroyed everything, down to the salt-pans.[2] It was intended to make a descent on New London—"a noted rendezvous of privateers," but it was thought wiser to get reinforcements before attempting this. One object had been "to draw Mr. Washington

[1] Tryon seems to have relied a good deal on this address—but says "the general effect" of it could not be discovered till there had been further operations on the coast. (Perhaps not till the fires had ceased smouldering.)

[2] "Another beautiful library" was destroyed at Norwalk.

"I should be very sorry, if the destruction of these two villages would be thought less reconcileable with humanity than with the love of my country, my duty to the King, and the law of arms."—*General Tryon's Despatch.* He explains that he did not intend to burn the two places of worship at Fairfield—they took fire unintentionally by the flakes from other buildings, as also that burnt at Norwalk; "but it is very difficult, where the houses are close, and of very combustible materials of boards and shingles, to prevent the spreading of the flames."

from the strong post he occupied in the mountains of Connecticut," and Clinton was assured that the inhabitants were incensed at his apathy in not coming out to help them. Washington had detached Heath, with two brigades, but dared not take more from the defence of the Highlands. He had, however, planned something, and it was executed the day after Tryon retired. Wayne surprised Stoney Point, marching by the defiles of the Donderberg, as Sir Henry Clinton once marched to Fort Montgomery. The garrison surrendered at discretion. The capture was effected without firing a musket—the fort was taken at the point of the bayonet. There were 553 prisoners. It was a most gallant action, and General Lee, in his disgrace, was moved to praise it. So was the British historian Stedman.[1] It came amidst the dismal ravagings and wastings. In August, Lee of Virginia took Paulus Hook. Washington was now at West Point, pushing on the fortifications which were to make it the strongest place in America.

On the 14th of August Admiral Collier took or destroyed the whole Boston fleet under Commodore Saltonstall, at Penobscot. It was a disgraceful affair, and gave the British Ministry some excuse for believing they could "reduce" America.

The winter of 1779–80 was the coldest ever known. It set in early. New York Bay was frozen, the ships were ice-bound, an army could have crossed the Hudson on foot. Knyphausen and the British in the city fully expected an attack; but Washington's half-fed, half-clad soldiers were fewer in number, and he had neither money nor means of transport. He planned a surprise of Staten Island, but Stirling's approach was discovered, and he was glad to retire with a few prisoners. Knyphausen made an incursion and surprised Newark, burned the Academy, and got safe back. So the war was moderately fed.

In this fifth winter of the war, the sufferings of Washington's army at Morristown were almost as great as at Valley Forge. Congress, always afraid lest Washington should play Cromwell with them, left the troops unpaid for five months, without forage—the officers living on bread-and-cheese rather than take any of their men's small allowance of meat! For weeks they were on half-rations; there was a scarcity of blankets; on New Year's Day of 1780 Washington wrote that both officers and

[1] "The conduct of the Americans upon this occasion was highly meritorious; for they would have been fully justified in putting the garrison to the sword; not one man of which was put to death but in fair combat."—STEDMAN, ii.

men were almost perishing of want. He feared his army would disband. Congress still had no power to raise taxes. The currency had sunk lower and lower, till 40 paper dollars were equal to but one of specie! Congress made paper legal tender, at its normal value; but after this matters were worse still, for a door was opened to knavery. Washington called on the States for contributions—if they did not respond he had made up his mind to requisition—though with every precaution against even incivility. But Jersey came to the rescue, and almost fed the army. The farmers sent in provisions, the women met to knit and sew for the soldiers. One good woman kept a great kettle on the fire, full of meat and vegetables, for any hungry soldier who dropped in.

The year 1779 ended for America with the departure from New York for Charleston of Sir Henry Clinton and Lord Cornwallis, with 7000 men, and a squadron under Admiral Arbuthnot. Cornwallis was now second in command in America, and had in his pocket his appointment as Commander-in-Chief should Clinton die or be incapacitated.

CHAPTER LXXXVII

THE ASSOCIATED COUNTIES: THE ESTABLISHMENT BILL

"The grievances we feel, and the cause of our misfortune, arise from the *corruption of men when chosen into Parliament.* Cut off the ways and means of corruption, and the effect must and will naturally cease. Mr. Burke's plan cuts off thirty-nine offices tenable and now held by members of the House of Commons. It also cuts off eleven now held by Peers in the House of Lords. This, indeed, is *striking in earnest* at the influence of the Crown over persons in Parliament. . . . The *great number* of offices of more or less emolument, which are now tenable by parties sitting in Parliament, really operate like *prizes* in a *lottery.* An *interested* man purchases a seat, upon the same principle as a person buys a *lottery* ticket. . . . I think, therefore, if there are less chances of emolument, the value of seats in Parliament *will fall* (though the situations will become much more honourable)."—*Lord Rockingham to Mr. Pemberton Milnes*, Feb. 28, 1780.

DURING the Christmas recess, a great movement took place in the country. Temple Luttrell's advice was followed. Meetings began to be held, the Counties began to petition, in the old style of the days of the Middlesex Election.[1] Yorkshire led the way. On the 30th of December, 1779, a great meeting at York, of gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders, resolved to petition Parliament for an enquiry into the great abuse of public expenditure, to reduce exorbitant emoluments, to abolish sinecures and unmerited pensions. Some were for going farther, and abolishing rotten boroughs, and making Parliaments quinquennial, triennial, even annual; but, perhaps fortunately, they could not agree as to which term they would have. Reform of Expenditure was another point—it was imperative—the country was being

[1] "A deputation from the Protestant Association, assembled under the patronage of Lord George Gordon, waited on Lord North, to request his lordship to present a petition from that society to Parliament, against a law which has already received the Royal Assent, for the relief of his Majesty's popish subjects in certain cases." North "absolutely refused."

squeezed to death. Electors were beginning to exact tests from candidates.

Writing of the York petition—in which he had a great part—Rockingham said, "Our misfortunes arise from *the corruption of men when chosen into Parliament.*"

But Rockingham was uneasy about the tests. The being elected a representative "is highly honourable, if it implies a trust," but it is disgraceful bondage if it means that you are to "lock up your reasoning faculties," and "tie yourself up beforehand," so that you cannot act according to your conscience at the moment—all the more if the tests are "loosely worded." Those who impose them are not even agreed. What does "more equal representation" mean? Some mean by it only the abolition of "what are called the rotten boroughs." Some think the owners of these boroughs should be compensated; others think not. Some think the seats for these boroughs should be filled by additional county members—others, that, as at Shoreham, the representatives should in future be chosen by the electors in the neighbouring districts. Others, again, think the great trading towns which have no "local representatives" ought to have these seats. Then there is another speculation on *more equal representation*, "which from its magnitude is indeed a most grave, solemn and important object of consideration. The proposition I mean is that as matters now are, *the people*, as they are called, are *not represented.* It is held that retaining the right of voting to freeholders in a county is an arbitrary and unconstitutional assumption of power." The same as to the now settled rights of voting in towns. "The assertion is, that *all men* (the whole people) should give their votes."

It is evident that Rockingham was willing to make Parliaments shorter, but thought that only confusion could result from annual Parliaments. He was also for reform in rotten boroughs, etc., but it appears evident that his friend Richmond's views on universal suffrage took his breath away. Burke's views of reform did not go nearly as far as Rockingham's—Burke believed the present arrangements admirable, all but incapable of improvement—if only bribery and corruption could be made to cease. Not the British Constitution, but corrupt influence, had brought us to our present pass. Talk of amending the Constitution always infuriated him.

Middlesex followed York; then came Hackney; then Chester, Herts, Sussex, Huntingdon, Surrey, Cumberland, Bedford, Essex,

Somerset, Gloucester, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, Norfolk, Berks, Bucks, Nottingham, Kent, Northumberland, Suffolk, Hereford, Cambridge, Derby. Hants petitioned the same day as Middlesex. The Welsh counties, Denbigh, Flint, and Brecknock also petitioned; so did the cities of London, Westminster, York, Bristol, Gloucester, and Hereford, and the towns of Nottingham, Reading, Cambridge, Bridgewater, and Newcastle-on-Tyne. Northamptonshire would not petition, but voted resolutions, and sent instructions to its representatives to vote for the Bill. There would have been still more activity if what had happened in America had not made many afraid of Committees and Associations. Many Whigs looked on these meetings of unofficial representatives of the people with eyes not much more friendly than those with which King Charles the First looked on Parliaments themselves. Parliament was elected to attend to politics, and these meetings pleased many staunch Whigs as little as "private meetings" pleased Strafford. Just as Kings suspected Parliaments of intending to usurp the power which lawfully belonged to the Sovereign, so the authentic Parliament of Great Britain suspected the Associators of intending to usurp the functions of Parliament. George the Third was shy of extra-parliamentary Addresses, even when "loyal"—he justly reflected that if his "Friends" took to addressing him often, Opposition would be sure to follow their example; and many Whigs felt the same about the meetings. There were a few protests due to this feeling—but even the Protests were in favour of the Bill, and only desired that all should be left to the discretion of Parliament. It was the old Commonwealth idea. But those times were gone by—the people were beginning to know too much to be willing to delegate everything to the men they had elected.

The country had had a terrible lesson in the meaning of irresponsible government. They had a King, so convinced that he knew what was best for his people, that no failure ever taught him he was wrong. A King who thought that no virtues and no abilities in a Minister could make up for want of subservience to the Sovereign; and who pardoned the most shameful neglect,[1] the most fatal incompetence, and was not even extreme to mark peculation, in those who were willing to be his tools. Such men, and such a King, had landed the country in a suicidal quarrel with America, and in two other wars—and a third war was pretty sure to come, for there was

[1] On February 10, 1780, Lord Pembroke resigned, telling the King that he could not support measures while Germaine remained.

already much soreness between Great Britain and Holland. Not to speak of the inexplicable disaster in America, and the still stranger successes — always followed by our giving up something — there was the horrid fact that for two months of last summer an enemy's fleet had ridden with impunity in the Channel. The crushing taxes, the mountains of Army and Navy Estimates, had not even ensured us a decisive victory on the 27th of July, 1778, and in 1779 had not even given us the means of defending our Arsenals. An American privateer had taken two of our ships in sight of Hull; a French fleet had taken another in sight of Plymouth — and Plymouth and Portsmouth had for their defence guns that did not fit their ammunition!

The whole country began to turn. The Counties had spoken. The country gentlemen, once so docile, had rebelled. At the great York meeting, on December 30, 1779, more solid wealth, and greater landed estates were represented than in the House of Commons. Such petitioners could not be treated like the tailors and cobblers of America. For the first time for many years Opposition felt it had a following, and redoubled its efforts. The King saw that he could no longer be sure that, however eloquent the speeches of Opposition, their motions would always be rejected by two to one. He tried for a coalition. At different times in the latter half of 1779 both Shelburne and Rockingham were approached by Thurlow. The King had to promise it should be a real Coalition, not a mere trick to draw them to support North. North even offered to go. But all fell through on the question of America. Opposition refused to come in at the price of carrying on the war; the King refused to make peace except on unconditional submission. On the 8th of February Sir George Savile presented the Yorkshire Petition, and challenged the Minister to say whether he meant to countenance it or not. Let him speak out like a man! North did so. Of course it would be received—no man in his senses would dare to reject it. No man in his senses, in that House, was ignorant that the right to petition belonged to all British subjects.

Then came the Jamaica Planters' Petition. The Planters expressed their very candid opinion of what Ministers had not done. The defences of Jamaica had been left to chance; and to chance, or Providence, was it due that the French flag was not now flying at Kingston. Jamaica was a very valuable island—"a great part even of what appears to be the interior wealth

of Great Britain is in reality the wealth of Jamaica." This was signed by seventy-five of the principal Planters, Merchants, and others, interested in the welfare of the island. There was "a sort of a protest" against it, signed by the watchful Atkinson, by the Keeper of Convicts on board the hulks at Woolwich, and by other less important persons, to the number of forty; it was much laughed at.

But there was a more important business on hand that day—February 11, 1780. Mr. Burke produced his "Plan for the better securing of the independence of Parliament, and the economical reformation of the Civil and other Establishments."[1] His speech—which lasted three hours and eighteen minutes—contained so much matter, such knowledge, such reasoning, that it was considered "almost beyond the powers of man to arrange it in so clear, so methodical, so masterly a manner."

It was the first serious attempt at reform since the accession of the House of Brunswick. After laying down the general principles of government and public expenditure, Burke said that his reforms would save the public £200,000 annually, and would cut off a quantity of influence equal to the places of fifty members of Parliament. He aimed at removing "the *means* of corruption"; there would then be no need for disqualifications. He did not propose to touch anything that any man held by a legal tenure, nor would he cut off any useful department.

There were five Bills. The first was mainly for the abolition of useless sinecures, and the limitations of pensions. The second was for the sale of the Crown Lands, and the application of their produce to the public service. The third, fourth, and fifth were for doing away with the separate administrations of Wales, of the Duchy of Cornwall, and of the Counties Palatine of Chester and Lancaster, "and uniting them more perfectly with the Crown."

He began with the Royal Household, and all its costly absurdities of antiquated office, and subordinate establishments, treasuries and comptrols. He proposed that, instead of *banks and treasuries*, there should be only offices of administration, and the Bank of England the Government's only bank. He showed what Necker had done for France—how by similar reforms he had created an annual revenue of more than half a million. There, the King had voluntarily surrendered his

1 "Mr. Burke's *extraordinary* Bill."—*The King to Lord North*, March 21, 1780.

Household, long "the stronghold of prodigality." Let us do justice to our enemies, said Burke; "these are the acts of a patriot king." Some have represented these reforms as a mere imposition on the French public. "Let me tell you, Sir, that the creation of a navy, and a two years' war without taxing, are a very singular species of imposture." But say that it is. Then let us do in reality what Louis does only in pretence. Is the constitution of nature altered by twenty miles of sea? Does economy give power there and profusion here? Ministers affect to doubt whether the people really want economy. "Sir, this is too ridiculous—can they want to be taxed?"

Then as to the petty sovereign jurisdictions to be abolished. In Saxon times this country was a heptarchy—now it is a strange sort of pentarchy. It is divided into five several distinct principalities, besides the supreme. "Cross a brook, and the King of England is no more than Prince of Wales. Go to the north—he is dwindled to a Duke of Lancaster; to the west—he pops upon you as Earl of Chester. A few miles more, and he surprises you again as Count Palatine of Lancaster. And if you go beyond Mount Edgecumbe, he is a Duke of Cornwall." And to all these five principalities there is a regular establishment of considerable expense, "and most domineering influence"—the apparatus of a kingdom for jurisdiction over a few private estates—the formality and charge of the Exchequer for collecting the rents of a country squire. Lancaster yields about £4000 a year, Wales and Chester hardly anything at all. The revenue exists for the sole purpose of multiplying offices and extending influence.

Then he came to the Royal Household, and made merry over the Board of Green Cloth, with its marshal, treasurer, and clerks. And the offices in the Royal Kitchen—he made the House laugh by reminding them how, in 1777, Lord Talbot had told them his attempts at reform in the Kitchen were defeated, because the King's turnspit was a member of Parliament! All these offices dated back to feudal times, when a great noble was proud to be the King's carver; and when the royal purveyors, sallying forth from the Gothic portcullis, seized what provision they could find, and hid it in a cavern. The anomaly of the Duchy of Lancaster went back to Henry IV—that astute usurper kept it apart from the Crown, that, if times changed, he might have it to fall back on.

When Barré brought his Motion for a Committee of Accounts

North again dared not oppose. He thought it so "salutary, indeed necessary," that he wondered it had not been proposed before. Barré said the only objection to a Committee was that Ministers would have the naming of it. North asked if that was a reproach?

Then came Savile's motion for a return of pensions granted during pleasure. This time North ventured a little farther. All was not pension that appeared on the Pension List—there was some secret-service money. And would you expose the necessities of ancient and honourable houses to save a wretched £50,000 a year? Nugent took this up. If Lady Betty and Lady Mary, who passed for persons of consequence in their neighbourhoods, were known to be pensioners, they would lose respect. It now came out that the pensions of the Duke of Gloucester and Lord Chatham were seven years in arrears—because the West India Island duties were not continued. Fox said the pensions to the Scots, to keep them in good humour, cost as much as putting down the 'Forty-Five. But the most extraordinary remark was made by Wedderburn. He was declaring that the sum paid for pensions was very small, and was not at all applied to influencing votes—it could only be curiosity that wanted to know the names. "But there are wives of members of parliament in the list," said Thomas Townshend, across the House. Upon which Wedderburn asked whether this proved the husband was bribed? "Is this age become on a sudden so virtuous, that what is given to a wife is always given to the husband?" To such arguments was Administration reduced.

North's Bill for a Committee of Accounts, the members not to belong to either House, excited much indignation, and was represented as an attempt to supersede the authority of Parliament. In the course of the debate Alderman Harley complained of the attacks on contractors. They were traduced and vilified. A noble lord in the Upper House had even called them "hellish contractors," had alluded to himself in a very particular manner, and had thrown out that he had attempted as bad a thing in Canada as "some particular gentlemen in India" who bought up all the rice—for he had tried to get all the corn into his own hands. It was a diabolical falsehood. Then he had been charged with making usurious contracts, than which no charge could be worse founded. He had no more than the usual profits—in fact, he often gave the nation credit by paying bills before he had the cash. He went into his dealings with Government—he had to give great credit; his contract was to pay in Portugal coin, but as that could not now be had, he exported English guineas instead. He

wished from his soul his accounts should be inspected—they might be prepared in two hours. He was of an ancient family, and was proud of preserving its honour, and he prayed for an enquiry.

Burke said unkindly it did not matter from what family the hon. gentleman was descended—that House was not a Court of Heraldry. He held a paper in his hand which proved the necessity of an enquiry into the public accounts—the title was a charge for the purchase and exportation of Portugal gold, and now that the fact was enquired into, no Portugal gold had been bought or exported. The Portugal gold turned out to be English guineas. Harley said the title of the paper was the same as for twenty years past. Portugal coin was said to have been purchased, but only English guineas actually were. He allowed this was improper, but it was as it had been for twenty years—it was the same during Mr. Pitt's administration—it had to be called Portugal coin, because it was against the law to export current coin of the realm. For some years the balance of trade had been against us in our commercial intercourse with Spain and Portugal, so we were obliged to export current coin.

The Bill was withdrawn, as a violation of Parliamentary etiquette.

Burke's great Bill was read a first time on February 23, and a second time on March 2,—both times without a division,—after which it was referred to a Committee of the Whole House. Ministers knew a safer way than the rejecting it *en bloc*—it would not have done, with so many petitions lying on the table. They meant to kill it in Committee.

Lord George Gordon did not like the Bill at all—it did not go nearly far enough. He called it "that shadow of an outline of reformation." Twice he tried to divide the House on it. Just as the House was going into Committee on the first clause, Rigby, with more zeal than discretion, rose to make a motion, the object of which was to take the whole Civil Establishment out of the Bill, on the ground that the Civil List was the King's private property, and that Parliament was not competent to control it. Rigby declared he had consulted no one on either side of the House; and he embarrassed Ministers not a little.[1] In the state of temper

[1] "A Suffolk fox-hunter, a bon-vivant of social habits, and convivial talents, and, lastly, paymaster-general; an appointment, the emoluments of which during the American war, amounted to fifty thousand pounds a year."—*The Lounger's Common-Place Book*, iii. 104. Rigby rescued the Duke of Bedford when he was being mobbed and horsewhipped on Lichfield race-course. He became the leader of the Bedford faction in the Commons, and was known as

out of doors, they were equally unwilling to affirm or deny the competence of the House; so they said it was "an abstract question," and tried to escape a division this way. Opposition saw their dilemma, and insisted. If the division went for Rigby, the Bill would be destroyed—but then would come the reckoning with Yorkshire and the other Associated Counties. At nine at night the division was taken, when the numbers were, for Rigby 199; against him, and for going into Committee, 205. So the House began at once to consider the first clause—the abolition of the office of Third Secretary of State. They debated till a quarter to three in the morning, when the office was retained by only 7 votes (208–201).[1]

The next clause was for the abolition of the Board of Trade. It caused one of the most remarkable debates of the whole Bill. At first, it was a duel between Eden and Burke. Eden, the ex-Commissioner for America, was a "Lord of Trade," and rose to defend a Board which had been said to have no other purpose than the providing eight members of Parliament, at £1000 a year each, to support the Minister. Eden twitted Burke with violating the principle that no clause in a Bill should ever be suffered to pass a Committee, unless upon a case previously made and on sufficient evidence—a principle proved in a very able pamphlet entitled *The Cause of the Present Discontents*. As proof of the useful work done by the Board of Trade, he adduced its records in upwards of 2300 volumes folio—now proposed to be thrown into the flames, as a mere monument of unprofitable labour. On a recent occasion Mr. Burke had "called his witnesses from the dead," and had hurt the feelings of widows, mothers, and sisters. In these 2300 volumes could be read the names of Mr. Locke, Mr. Addison, Mr. Prior, Lord Molesworth, Mr. Charles Townshend—to say nothing of Mr. John Pownall, still alive, who passed thirty years of his life at the Board—twenty-four as its secretary.

Bloomsbury Dick. "From the commencement of his fortunate career, no revolution of parties ever threw him back." The author of the *Lounger* calls him "a corpulent epicure." Though not an orator, he was listened to with attention, especially on points of order; and had the art of recalling the House to good humour.

[1] To show how unnecessary was a third Secretary of State, Burke had said the office was extinct already—deposited with the corpse of Lord Suffolk in a superb cemetery. Lord Suffolk "was a man of honour—he would not have sat a year in his bedchamber, resting his legs afflicted with the gout, on his green box containing the papers of his office," but still holding the post of Secretary of State, if he had not been convinced the business of the State could be very well managed without his assistance.

Burke replied that he had ridiculed Suffolk's office, not his person—he had called his office the widowed secretaryship, because it was vacant twelve months after his death. He declined to read, or even look at the 2300 volumes folio—their "dull, senseless, sluggish contents" were to be made to prove that what is laborious is useful. He regarded the Board of Trade as useless, idle, and expensive—it had become an academy of *Belles Lettres*—its public exercise did it honour—the historian's labours, the deep religious researches (Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*), the essence of epistolary correspondence (Mr. Eden's *Letters to Lord Carlisle*), the great fund of political and legal knowledge, displayed the high abilities of four of them—a fifth would have been a good minor poet in a poetic age, and was a great one in ours (Carlisle). There was another gentleman, who had sat long at the Board (Mr. Soame Jenyns), who, among other admired performances, had written on the *Origin of Evil*. Burke did not know whether the Board suggested the title of his book—but it certainly was a great political evil, for it was expensive, and it increased the influence of the Crown. He pursued the accomplished Lords of Trade from one allegory to another, till at last he likened them to a crow's-nest in which nightingales were kept prisoners—he wished to set the nightingales free, that they might sing more delightfully! He revered literature, but he would not read the 2300 folios; neither would he be so cruel as to ask his worthy friend, Mr. John Pownall, whether the best part of his life was spent in the discharge of a useless office.[1]

Nothing daunted, Eden spoke again—alleging the great services of the Board, their correspondences with Secretaries of State and Provincial Governors, the treaties they had advised, the laws they had made, the Governors they had dismissed. And Mr. Locke and Mr. Addison were once on the Board.

Burke answered that all the useful work had been done by an unpaid Committee of Council. Very soon after the Revolution the Board dwindled to a useless sinecure. During the whole

[1] Many years afterwards Gibbon commented on this scene. "It must be allowed," he says, "that our duty was not intolerably severe, and that I enjoyed many days and weeks of repose without being called away from my library to the office. . . . I can never forget the delight with which that diffusive and ingenious orator, Mr. Burke, was heard by all sides of the House, and even by those whose existence he proscribed. The Lords of Trade blushed at their insignificancy, and Mr. Eden's appeal to the 2500 (*sic*) volumes of our Reports, seemed only to excite a general laugh. I take this opportunity of certifying the correctness of Mr. Burke's printed speeches, which I have heard and read."—Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, i. 156.

American dispute, not a single scrap of paper had been laid before Parliament from the Board of Trade on the state or temper of America. He returned Eden's quotation with interest. Eden, in his letter to Carlisle, had described himself as a person totally secluded from the political world, a mere idle, unemployed spectator, with no information on what was going on but what was contained in the newspapers! Later in the debate, Governor Pownall declared that whenever the Board did interfere in the Colonies they created a dispute, which always ended by impairing the authority of the Crown! As for their plans for new Colonies, their plan for West Florida created a civil war, and the Governor took one of his own forts by storm from the King's troops! When the matter was finally settled, it was not by the Board, but by the Court of King's Bench.

Suddenly the debate took a curious and unexpected turn. It had already tended to digress into a discussion of the Civil List part of the Bill, and the competence of Parliament, when Fox called on the Speaker, "as the highest legal authority in the kingdom," to give his opinion, whether there was, or was not, an inherent right in the representatives of the people to control the exercise of any power in the Crown that tended to support a Government by influence and corruption, against the voice of the people.

The Speaker was not in his place, but his secretary "rushed through the side gallery" to fetch him. Norton came immediately, and took his seat on the Treasury Bench, Fox repeated the question, adding that he alluded to the proposition asserted by "a right hon. gentleman on the floor" (Rigby) last Wednesday. His opinion being thus demanded, in his capacity of member of that House, and a great professional lawyer, Sir Fletcher Norton (having left the Speaker's chair) replied at much length. Since he had been Speaker, he had as far as possible avoided giving opinions—he had not long sat in that chair, when the Royal Marriage Act passed, in 1772.[1] He was then called upon

[1] He referred to the clause in the Marriage Act which made persons present at any marriage solemnised contrary to the provisions of that Act liable to the penalties of a *præmunire*. The word *præmunire* had never been legally defined. It was a species of offence created by an Act of Richard II, and vested a power in the King's Judges to punish the offender at discretion, short of loss of life or member. Fletcher had said such an undefined power was repugnant both to the common and statute law of the land, and to the scheme and spirit of the English Constitution, and the immutable principles of natural justice. The offender ought to know what risk he runs, and the punishment ought to be proportioned to the "real turpitude and enormity of the offence."

to give his opinion—as he was now. But by complying with the wishes of the House, he had the misfortune to give some persons very great offence. After this he had tried to avoid mixing in the debates. He then gave as his opinion that while the House had an undoubted right to control the expenses of Government, it could not without inconsistency resume any part of the £800,000 a year for the Civil List, or meddle with the King's Household. The less, that eight years after his Majesty's accession Parliament had paid about that amount of arrears; and again, eight years later, had voted an additional £100,000 a year, on the ground that £800,000 was totally inadequate. (Norton did not conceal his opinion that it was fully adequate.) As to other points of the Bill—the general cry out of doors was against sinecures. He himself held one —he was Chief Justice in Eyre of the Forests south of Trent— it was not so profitable as was reported, but it was much too profitable for the duties annexed to it. If there was to be a general reform, he was very willing to submit to it. He had made enquiries, and could say that the powers vested in the Chief Justice in Eyre were such as ought not to be exerted. Applications had been made to him to exercise those powers, and he had refused, because they "would lead to the greatest hardships and oppressions."

He next spoke of the Petitions, and said it was the undoubted privilege of the people of England to petition either House, or any branch of the legislature. But he disapproved of Committees and Associations. He thought the Bill had taken up too much time, to the neglect of the Petitions. As for public economy — one great object recommended in them — it was now absolutely necessary for the preservation of the State. The other part—the influence of the Crown—was "palpable and notorious." No one could have sat in that House as many years as he had done and not perceive both its existence and its apparent increase. It was the duty of every member to reduce it.

And now came words which took the whole House by surprise. He said that "the noble lord in the blue ribbon" and himself "were not friends; he was not a friend to the noble lord, and he had repeated proofs that the noble lord was no friend of his." Ever since he had reported the sense of this House, upon presenting the money bills, at the Bar of the other, all appearances had ceased on the part of the noble lord. He was still at a loss to guess what just cause of offence he

had given. From a recent transaction, the noble lord and he must henceforward stand upon the most unequivocal terms—all appearance of mutual goodwill was at an end. If the noble lord did not do him justice, he should state the facts to the House.

As to the Board of Trade, he was clear it was useless and expensive, and increased the influence of the Crown.

North never allowed himself to lose anything from temper. With the utmost sweetness he declared his total ignorance of what was alluded to, or why the right hon. gentleman said they were not friends. He must have been betrayed into saying so by heat and passion. He had a due respect for the right hon. gentleman, and was quite a stranger to what the recent transaction was. If any negotiation was carrying on, it was more than he knew of.

Norton rose "in some warmth," and said he wondered the noble lord dared assert to his face that he was negotiating with him. He never had, and never would, and if the noble lord did not instantly explain his words he would reveal all he knew.

North appealed to the Committee to say whether he had said so—he had declared he knew nothing about any negotiation at all being on foot. He by no means wished anything that related to himself should be concealed. Norton said he would not be trifled with—if the noble lord did not expressly assert that he had never been concerned in any negotiation with himself, he would state every particular. North was still totally at a loss to discover his meaning. He never wished to give him just cause of offence—he never wished to conceal anything.

Then Norton spoke out. When he was solicited by the Duke of Grafton to become Speaker of the House, he had hesitated. Besides other reasons, he did not wish to "be taken out of the line of his profession," and he would accept only if the way was kept open for him to return to Westminster Hall. He believed it would not be deemed arrogance or vanity to say that he was then at the head of his profession, as a common lawyer. So, till he was provided for, in the way of his profession, he was to have the sinecure he now enjoyed. On those terms he accepted. But he had lately heard that there was a negotiation on foot—he heard it from the first law-officer of the Crown—that it was intended to remove a Chief Judge (Mr. De Grey), give him a pension, and put the Attorney-General in his room. He wrote

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to North for an interview—requesting that someone else might be present to report what passed. North received him alone, and professed to know nothing whatever about the terms on which Norton had accepted the Speakership. Norton further said that money had been offered him.

Rigby had to admit that he undertook the original negotiation,—at Grafton's request,—but, so far as his memory went, he had not understood that North knew about it. North said he was not responsible for any promises made by his predecessor. He did not know of it, and was not bound by it. As for money being offered, the right hon. gentleman was grossly misinformed. As for no third person being present, he was sorry there was not.

A long altercation followed, with assertions and contradictions, and a spiteful speech from Wedderburn, who said, "Not content with a great sinecure, the Speaker wanted to return to the profession to check the preferment of those he had left to toil." "Such warmth and such a scene" were never known. The affair made a good deal of noise at the time, but soon died away, leaving only one more example of the influence of the Crown. The Judgeship was given as Norton had said it was to be.

At a quarter past two in the morning the House divided. For abolishing the Board of Trade, 207; for retaining it, 199.

It was the first of the great defeats received by Administration. It would have proved fatal to any other. Opposition had tried to persuade the Lords of Trade to retire before the division—if they had done so, the majority would have been doubled. But they remained, and voted in their own cause—as Germaine had done in his.[1]

In the midst of so much that was disagreeable, it was an agreeable change when (February 29) the Thanks of both Houses were presented to Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, for his two sea-fights, of the 8th and 16th of January, 1780. On the 8th he took sixteen Spanish merchantmen, laden with flour, wheat, and naval stores, belonging to the Royal Company of Caracas, with their convoy of seven ships of war. On the 16th, in very tempestuous weather, he engaged a Spanish squadron of fourteen sail of the line off Cape St. Vincent. The action lasted from two in the afternoon to two o'clock next morning, by which time Rodney had taken or destroyed

[1] Gibbon, in a fit of the gout, was brought down to vote for himself. Only Soame Jenyns walked out before the Division.

seven ships;[1] and at sunset on the 17th he passed the Straits, thus relieving Gibraltar. Certainly, the North Administration had no right to complain of Fortune, who, when they had quarrelled with all their best admirals, sent them Rodney.

[1] "As fine ships as ever swam."—*Rodney's Despatch to Sandwich.*

CHAPTER LXXXVIII

THE ARMED NEUTRALITY

"All the neutral States of Europe seem at present disposed to change what had before been deemed the law of nations, to wit, that an enemy's property may be taken wherever found; and to establish a rule that free ships shall make free goods. This rule is itself so reasonable, and of a nature to be so beneficial to mankind, that I cannot but wish it may become general. . . . In the meantime, and until I have received orders on the subject, it is my intention to condemn no more English goods found in Dutch vessels, unless contraband."—*Franklin to an Agent for the American Cruisers*, Passy, May 30, 1780.

THE Armed Neutrality grew out of the refusal of Spain in 1779–80 to admit Russian ships into the Mediterranean. Catherine was at first very angry with Spain, but she soon saw the way to get rid of the obnoxious Right of Search. The principle of "Free Bottoms make Free Goods"[1] was a deathblow to this "right." Spain was the first to accede. Louis XVI said the principle was the chief thing for which he had gone to war. Great Britain declined, justifying all the seizures she had made, and declaring that her Admiralty Courts would do justice if complaint was made.

As soon as the American war began, this question of neutrality—the first question in every war—had come to the front, and instantly involved us in a difficulty with Holland. England insisted on the Right of Search—the thing which made our "dominion of the seas" so hateful to France and Spain. We had indeed no real friend now, except the Queen of Portugal. The other neutral nations were neutral only in name, and they scarcely troubled themselves to keep up appearances.

At the end of December, 1779, Administration received intelligence that a number of Dutch merchantmen, laden with timber and naval stores for the French service, and therefore not allowed by the States General an escort of their own, intended to tack themselves on to Count Byland, who, with

[1] Sometimes expressed, "Neutral flags protect Neutral bottoms."

a small squadron, was to escort a Dutch convoy to the Mediterranean. Commodore Fielding was despatched to search them, and seize all cargo that was contraband of war. Fielding intercepted them in the Channel on the 30th, and asked permission to search. Byland showed an affidavit, signed by all the merchant captains, that they had no sort of contraband. The Admiral declared the same upon his honour—he had refused to take on board timber for ship-building in France. But he had vessels laden with iron and hemp, and Fielding would not let them pass. The squadrons lay by each other all night, boats went to and fro, but Fielding would not yield. Resistance was useless. For form's sake a few broadsides were fired, and then the Dutch ships all struck at the same moment—as had been arranged for before Byland sailed. Ten of the merchantmen had got off in the night; the other seven were taken. Fielding told the Admiral he might now sail "what way he liked," but Byland preferred coming to Spithead with his convoy, as a protest.

The Dutch put up with this treatment; and the action of the Ministry was much applauded in England—it was said that our old spirit had revived, and the disgrace of the summer was forgotten.

On April 21 Sir Joseph Yorke, Envoy to their High Mightinesses the States General, presented a Memorial, charging them with not only withholding the succours promised by treaty, but with "a manifest partiality in favour of the enemy," by granting men-of-war to convoy naval ammunition to French ports, while they imposed a heavy penalty on those subjects of the Republic which supplied the garrison of Gibraltar with provisions—though at that very moment Spain had disturbed the Dutch trade "in an unprecedented and outrageous manner." It also complained bitterly of the protection given to Paul Jones. The asylum granted to that pirate was directly contrary to the Treaty of Breda, of 1667. Added to which their High Mightinesses are silent as to the reclamations of his Majesty, but the moment his enemies asked it, you assured them you would observe a strict neutrality. His Majesty therefore declares, in the most amicable but most serious manner, that if their High Mightinesses do not in three weeks give satisfactory answers about the succours they ought to give but do not, his Majesty will have to look on the United Provinces as on any other neutral Power unprivileged by Treaty.

Their High Mightinesses replied that they could not answer in three weeks, because the Provinces must deliberate; but they promised to be as speedy as possible.

Meanwhile a very important personage entered the arena. On April 3 Prince Gallitzin, the Russian Minister, presented another Memorial—from the Empress Catherine II.[1] Her Memorial began with her regard for the rights of neutrality and the liberty of universal commerce—to which all Europe could testify. Yet her subjects had been molested in their navigation, and stopped in their operations, by those of the belligerent Powers. This ought to excite the attention of all neutral nations, and the Empress finds herself obliged to publish to all Europe the principles she means to follow, to prevent any misunderstanding. She finds these principles are coincident with the primitive right of nations. They are—

1. That all neutral ships may freely navigate from port to port, and on the coasts of nations at war.
2. That effects belonging to subjects of warring powers shall be free in all neutral vessels, except contraband merchandise.
3. That the Empress holds, as to the specification of the above-mentioned merchandise, to what is mentioned in the 10th and 11th articles of her treaty of Commerce with Great Britain, of 1694, extending her obligations to all the powers at war.
4. That a blocked port is one which is so well kept in by the ships of the power that attacks it, that it is dangerous to enter it.
5. That these principles serve as a rule in judgments on the legality of prizes.

France, Spain, Sweden and Denmark at once gave in their adherence. But before this, on April 17, Great Britain notified to the United Provinces that the Dutch were henceforth to be considered as on merely the same footing as any other neutral State, not privileged by Treaty.

[1] Dated March 21.

CHAPTER LXXXIX

THE RESOLUTION OF THE 6TH APRIL, 1780

"It is common to attribute the happiness and comfort which this country enjoyed from the period of the Revolution till the commencement of the present reign, to the excellence of our constitution, to the Whigs, and to a variety of other causes, whereas I conceive the true cause to have been the existence of a Pretender with a very just right to the Throne upon all Tory and monarchical principles and all other prejudices, but without sufficient capacity to disturb the reigning family, or to accommodate himself to the new principles which have been making a slow but certain progress ever since the discovery of the press. . . . The Hanover family never imagined they would continue."—Lord Shelburne, *Autobiography*.

On March 6 North opened his Budget. In easy, self-complacent sentences he told the House how much less his new taxes had brought him than he expected; and the several wars had cost more—the Navy, in particular, "had devoured the resources of the country"—and he must borrow 12 millions—need not have borrowed so much if he had got the revenue he expected from the East India Company. He believed it was the universal opinion that we ought to share in the Company's profits, but the treaty was broken off for the present. On the 15th he had the far more unpleasant task of explaining how the interest on the 12 millions was to be found. It amounted to £697,500. He had gone first to beer, but warned by the fate of the Cider Tax, and unwilling to make the pot of porter dearer, he was going to tax malt. By this means the exciseman would not penetrate into that house which is an Englishman's castle, and even the brewers would not feel it, for he was only going to tax persons who brewed their own beer. To public brewers he would make an allowance. Wines and spirits would only be taxed higher—and exported coals. As all this would not be enough, he was forced with regret to put a tax on salt—but so small that the poorest would not feel it. 1s. 2d. a bushel would only be a farthing in the pound, and he was putting only 10d. And as a peck of salt is sufficient for the use of "any little family" for a twelvemonth, the tax

cannot possibly be oppressive to the poor, and we shall get £69,000 without anybody knowing how. Still, not enough. So he would tax every advertisement in a newspaper 6d.—this will bring in £9000. Then an entirely new tax, but one that will be paid with cheerfulness—a tax on all receipts given to administrators and executors—no such receipt to be legal without it. Lastly, a tax on licences to sell tea. All this gave a trifle over the sum needed, but one must be prepared for contingencies. Doubtless North was warned by the failure of so many of his "expectations." But he was still sanguine—he assured the House that there was a comfortable prospect for next year—various subjects of efficient taxation, which he had forborne to touch on—for reasons. There was also the £200,000 of public money to fall in. And the East India Company was "another field of expectation."

A little before this Temple Luttrell had complained against Lord North. Luttrell had sat for six sessions as member for Milborne Port, when he learned that North had bought the borough representation of Mr. Medlycott. His lordship's agents had said, "At any cost, Mr. Luttrell must be removed. Lord North is determined to pursue him to any borough for which he may be a candidate." So Medlycott—heretofore a good friend to Luttrell—had been bought over, "after a six months' siege." North said he was perfectly astonished at being accused of undue practices. All he could say was he cared not how soon the charge was gone into—he was conscious of his own innocence. He never had the most distant intention of persecuting the hon. gentleman—the words imputed to him were not spoken by his authority.

It could not be proved that North's agents acted by his orders, so the House acquitted him.

The Contractors' Bill passed at last; and on the same day[1] the Great Bill came on again. Before the business began Sir Fletcher Norton rose to apologise for what he said the other night. He had received great provocation, but that did not justify his going into matter totally foreign to the subject under their consideration. But while he begged pardon of the Committee, he did not retract a syllable. He had stated facts. De Grey (son of the Chief Justice) denied the report that £7000 had been paid by North out of the public Treasury to the Chief Justice, in lieu of a reversion to a particular office in the Common Pleas. These disgraceful charges and ambiguous denials show in what estimation the Minister was held.

The House began to think duels were rather too frequent—

[1] March 20.

Mr. Fullarton had just called out Lord Shelburne for words spoken in the House of Lords, on the manner in which he, "a man without a day's service," had been made a lieutenant-colonel over the heads of men of military experience like Lord Harrington. Fullarton complained that he had been called a clerk—he had been Secretary to the Embassy in Paris, and had offered to raise a regiment! After the duel (in which Shelburne was wounded) there was a debate (March 22nd). Sir James Lowther said there was an end to freedom of debate, and of the business of Parliament. Parliament would resemble a Polish Diet, and members had better all take to arms and fight it out. It was even hinted that perhaps private members were set on to shoot the members of Opposition! On this Adam rose to assure the House that in a "late unhappy affair" he had no motive but the conviction that he could not exist with honour without taking the step he did. He had not done it to please the Minister—he thanked God he could say he had never crossed that Minister's threshold, nor asked him a favour. Rigby said bluntly, as nobody had been killed, why interfere? We can't prevent gentlemen going out, if they feel their honour is injured. And it might perhaps "teach gentlemen to confine themselves within proper limits," and speak with better manners—a remark he did not apply personally to any gentleman in particular. Fox assured Rigby that, so far as he himself was concerned, what had happened had not taught him better manners, nor ever should, nor restrain him within any limits but those he chalked out for himself. And when the new levies came under consideration he meant to object to that particular regiment, because the person appointed to command it did not appear to him a fit person.

On March 20, 1780, the House went on with "Mr. Burke's Establishment Bill." The next clause was for abolishing the offices of Treasurer of the Chamber, and others—the others being those of "Cofferer of the Household, and Comptroller of the Household; the office commonly called the Master of the Household, and clerk of the Green Cloth, etc."; and the "deputies, clerks and assistants of any of them."

It soon became clear to Burke that he would not carry the clause. The "very pith and marrow of his plan" was in that clause. It led the way. If the Household was not to be touched, the whole aim of the Bill was lost. He had never designed to retrench the King's personal expenses, or tie down his table by contract—as he had been accused of doing. He only wanted to take care that fraud should no longer prevail in those who served his

Majesty with provisions. It had been asked, what would his plan save? In giving up the clause for having the table served by contract, he had given up about £12,000 out of his projected savings, but if the other parts of the Bill passed, the savings in the Household would be about £80,000 a year. He had been charged with an ungentlemanlike desire to stint the Sovereign. He had not touched the Privy Purse, for which £48,000 was allotted. That this was more than sufficient to enable his Majesty to live in splendour, he showed by the example of the Duke of Northumberland, who possessed three palaces—each more splendidly furnished than any of his Majesty's houses. The Duke's income was not more than £48,000 a year, and Northunberland House was so magnificent that it was the first resort of the curious, from the French Ambassador downwards, especially during the life of the late Duchess, in whose time the finest pictures that could be procured were purchased at any price. Two noblemen, her sons, had an establishment fit for princes, and all this, he verily believed, short of £48,000 a year.

In pathetic words he said that if this clause was carried against him, he should consider his Bill as gone—he would not take any more upon him, and put his weak and disordered constitution to the torture to fight his Bill through the House, inch by inch, clause by clause, line by line. He would leave it for the people to go on with it.

The clause was lost by 158 to 211, and Burke said he did not care what became of the rest of the Bill. Fox urged him to go on—if they gained ever so little it was worth something—if they only abolished the seven Lords of Trade it would be worth the struggle. He was determined, and he doubted not his hon. friend would join him in renewing the Bill from session to session, till they effected the purpose of demolishing the influence of the Crown. They would have seven less of the enemy to fight.

Burke admitted he was right. The Committee went through the whole clause, and rejected every part of it.

On the 21st North moved "That notice be given that the capital stock or debt of £4,200,000 and all arrears of annuity due and payable in respect thereof from the public to the united company of merchants trading to the East Indies will be redeemed and paid off on the 10th of April, 1783, agreeable to the power of redemption in the said Act" (17th George II).

Fox asked if he was not content with having lost America? Did he mean to retain his office till he had reduced our dominions

to these islands? What good could this motion do? It could not be carried into effect. It was a threat—suppose it were put in execution? How was the money to be paid? It must be paid at par, and as the £4,200,000 stood at 3 per cent. and the 3 per Cents. were at 60, the public would lose a clear 40 per cent. on every £100 they paid off. And how would he replace the Company? Had he any plan for a new one? He must know the Company will laugh at his idle menace, and he hoped to God they would, and not take it seriously. If they did, woe be to the revenue, and to our acquisitions in India, and to the public! The bad understanding between the noble lord and the Company arose from his having tried to possess himself of the Company's patronage, and to get everything his own way in Leadenhall Street. North said he had never tried to get the patronage. He had occasionally recommended a person, but he defied any man to prove he had ever aimed at getting the patronage. He was only putting in a claim to a reversion—it would be the Company's own fault if the notice was carried into execution. Burke, in a fury, exclaimed that the giving notice was the most wicked, absurd, abandoned, profligate, mad, and drunken intention that ever was formed. It was like a new Mississippi scheme—only fit for Mr. Law. The attempt would ruin all who ventured on it. Before Parliament said it would pay off the £4,200,000 it must see the Company's accounts. The attempt to gain a great revenue from America lost us thirteen colonies. Let us not make the same mistake again. Let us look on the Company as our friends—our best commercial allies. Having talked himself cool, he apologised for the warmth of his language. There followed a pretty little quarrel among the Company members—the partisans and opposers of the unfortunate Lord Pigot. North's notice was carried by a great majority.[1]

On the 6th of April, 1780, Dunning brought on his famous motion on the Influence of the Crown, and the Abuses in Public Expenditure. He brought it after the titles of forty petitions on the same subject had been read. He began by speaking of Burke's Bill. When that Bill was first proposed, it had the united approbation of, he believed, every man in the House. Other opinions had seemed to prevail later, and he believed those other opinions originated outside the walls of that House. After a show of candour, a mock approbation, the noble lord "who is supposed to lead the majorities in this House" found the Bill was fundamentally wrong. Dunning then moved, as

[1] 142 to 68.

his first resolution, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, THAT THE INFLUENCE OF THE CROWN HAS INCREASED, IS INCREASING, AND OUGHT TO BE DIMINISHED." The second was "That this House is competent to examine into and correct abuses in expenditure."

Nugent seems to have made the longest of the ministerial speeches. Out of the mass of meaningless phrases it is difficult to extract anything like a defence. The report of his speech reads like a caricature. The question was an abstract one. Some might think the influence of the Crown was increased, some that it was increasing, others, that it ought to be diminished. Yet the same gentlemen who agree in the abstract might disagree as to the remedy. He could fairly say the proposition was not founded. He had more than once given it as his sincere opinion that the influence of the Crown was not increased. He never recollected a period when it was less felt than since his noble friend in the blue ribbon came into office. And was this a time to call for the diminution? When America was lost—("A loud cry of Hear him! hear him!") He repeated, America was lost. The American war proved a wrong measure. He had supported the war—he was wrong. ("Another loud cry from the Opposition benches.") He did not mean wrong in principle, but, from a succession of untoward incidents, wrong because it had failed. At such a time—when the people were heavily burdened, disappointed, and out of temper, it was idle to talk of the dangerous influence of the Crown. Supposing it were so—it could only be a temporary thing—as soon as the war was over it would cease—things would flow in their old channel! How absurd to apply a perpetual remedy to a temporary evil! The hon. gentleman had said that there were members who voted in the House that no such influence existed, and out of the House said it existed in a dangerous degree. If so, they were abandoned wretches—profligate, shameless, unfit for human society! But perhaps the learned gentleman is mistaken—or has exaggerated their number. If there are any on this side of the House, I hope they will go over to the other. I say to them, "Go, you worst of men, preserve some decency—say the same thing in public as in private!"

Dunning here said he could not mention names, but though he had said there were fifty such men, there were many more. He knew fifty members in that House who—mostly in his hearing—totally condemned out of the House the measures they supported in it. And if the House desired it he could and would name them.

The House did not desire it.

Sir Fletcher Norton repeated much of what he had said the other night. Who could doubt the influence of the Crown is increasing? Ministerialists returned to their best argument—the proposition was an abstract one. When at last North rose, it was to go over the old miserable defence of himself, how he was ready to retire—how he was falsely charged with being the author of our present misfortunes. ("Many gentlemen cried across the House, 'You are, you are.' Others called out to take down his words," "that Opposition was subverting the constitution.") There was confusion. North continued to say the American war was not his measure. He had not tried for the patronage of the Company. He had not put his own friends in the new loan—he had only given the preference to those who were always ready to assist Government with their money. Hoping to scare the House into rejecting the motion, Dundas moved the insertion of the words "That it is necessary to declare" after the word "committee." But they were instantly adopted, and at midnight the Committee divided, when the numbers were, for Mr. Dunning's First Resolution 233, against 215.

Then the Second Resolution was moved. Ministers made a frantic effort to stop it—North implored the House not to proceed, but it was agreed to without a division. Then Thomas Pitt made the third motion—"That it was the duty of that House to provide an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of." Again North implored the House not to proceed. This, too, passed unanimously. Then Fox moved that the Resolutions be immediately reported to the House.[1] North opposed this as violent, arbitrary, and unusual, but it was agreed to, and Mr. Hussey reported to the House that the Committee had come to the said resolutions severally. Then it was resolved that the report be received. This was done, and members went home from one of the most important occasions in Constitutional History.[2]

On April 10 Dunning brought another motion—for securing the Independence of Parliament. In a short but very strong speech he said it was useless to vote that the allegations in the Petitions were true, unless a stop was put to the evils. The influence chiefly complained of by the Petitions—that which had

[1] This was to prevent their changing their minds.

[2] Only 9 English County members voted against the resolution, but of the 28 Scots members who voted in the minority 18 stood for Counties.

so alarmed the country — was the corrupt pecuniary influence supposed to be used on members of Parliament — nothing else could account for their supporting such measures as those of the present Ministry. He therefore moved that "within seven days of the opening of each session, there be laid before this House exact accounts of every sum paid in the preceding year, out of the Civil List, or any other branch of the public revenue, to any member of either House, specifying when, and on what account."[1]

North, who stooped to conquer, protested he had no wish to oppose the resolution—he thought it asked for a fair account, and such as he himself felt inclined to give, being conscious that no member of that House received a shilling from Government which Government should be ashamed to pay, or the member ashamed to receive. He only thought there might be difficulties in specifying—and also it might create a difference with the House of Lords—otherwise he thought it quite fair and reasonable. Dundas, however, did not. He admitted with cynical candour that an amendment proposed by him had been intended to wreck the motion. He thought it would scare the House—but it did not, it was adopted, and strengthened the motion. So now he would give a direct negative. He got out Burke's *Thoughts on the Discontents* of ten years ago, and read a passage which he professed to believe would smash the present motion. It happened, however, to be about the great offices of State—not about bribing members of Parliament. But this time Dunning only got a majority of two.

Next day (April 11) Gregory, Member for Rochester, presented a petition from nearly 2000 inhabitants of that city, praying for the repeal of the Catholic Relief Bill. Lord George Gordon lamented that so few of the clergy had signed it. He read to the House Archbishop Ussher's *Declaration against Popery* (written in 1626, to inaugurate fresh persecutions of the Irish Catholics). This man seemed to shrink from no ill-omened precedent for his relentless crusade. Mr. Turner told him he "had got a twist in his head—a certain whirligig which ran away with him." Otherwise, he wished him well—as a staunch Whig, an enemy to the American war, and a friend to liberty, and he could not bear to see him make himself a laughing-stock. A Protestant did not plough the ground better than a Papist, nor a Papist better than a Protestant—if Catholics conformed to the laws of the

[1] "The strange resolution of the Committee."—*The King to Lord North*, April 11.

country, they had a right to every possible indulgence. To this Gordon replied by reading something Father O'Leary had said against the principles of Wesley. He read Wesley's reply, and went off into sheer madness. There would be another massacre of Protestants, "like that in Ireland," if what the Established Church wished was not done. Some of these persons had told him they already considered themselves absolved from their allegiance. They had not yet determined to murder the King—they only thought they were absolved from allegiance. The Lord Advocate knew what the people of Scotland thought, and that he (Gordon) was not throwing out an idle threat; "he meant to put Ministers on their guard," and "warn them to do what was right in time." He had been twice to Court to tell his Majesty what he knew, and now told Ministers.

In the extremely acrimonious debate on the Duke of Richmond's motion respecting the defenceless state of Devon and Cornwall (April 25), the Duke described the scene when the enemy's fleet was before Plymouth—the people flying, and the command divided between three persons, not one of whom had any control over the other, nor any instructions in case of emergency. Lord Townshend had got a letter from Major Anderson, who commanded the artillery. He declared that Plymouth had not been so weak—a ship of war must pass the fire of 76 cannon before she could get into the Hamoaze—the Major, however, does not appear to have said whether the 76 cannon had shot that fitted them. Richmond then read the Diary of Sir David Lindsay, commander of the troops, and his correspondence with Lord Amherst. Lindsay said he found Plymouth astonishingly defenceless—the lines miserable beyond description. His force was not nearly equal to the duty, and he had 1000 French prisoners to guard; 500 recruits were sent him—half of them pressed men, and the whole so mutinous that they required troops to guard them! The guns needed over 1000 men to work them, and there were only 35 invalids—there was, in fact, nothing. And though it was said the navy would give assistance, he obtained seamen to work the guns with great difficulty—and not nearly enough, "and no great dependence was to be placed upon them, upon many accounts." (The result of the new press-law.) In answer to Lindsay's representations, Amherst wrote that he seemed eager to multiply difficulties, and if he wished to resign he did not doubt his resignation would be accepted, and he could have the governorship of Whitehaven. Lindsay on this did resign, but declined Whitehaven—he would not go from actual service

to a place where no actual service was likely to occur. Earl Temple [1] said that to his own knowledge, when Amherst was written to for instructions how to act, in case the enemy landed at Rye, he replied that "the general was to act as he thought proper." Amherst most insolently denied any sort of responsibility, said that whether Lindsay resigned or was dismissed he did not consider himself accountable either way. He had been charged with throwing the blame on Lindsay, by saying the other day that if the place was not in a state of defence he had done all that depended on him, and it was not his fault. Allowing he said it, it did not impute blame to Sir David—if he remembered right he said he could not be everywhere, and if his orders were not obeyed it was not his fault.

At an early part of the debate Stormont had tried to stop discussion by saying "there already subsisted a greater degree of communication between this country and France than he wished." Stormont probably meant this in its most offensive sense—that Opposition conveyed information to our enemies. Not long before a story had been put about that two men were seen measuring the height of a hill in Surrey—for the Duke of Richmond! Shelburne insisted on Stormont explaining his words. Men of the first rank, the most respectable talents, and the most noble principles, were now freely calumniated—he alluded to his noble friend (Richmond), who had been lately vilified in the most abominable manner. He hoped that the game played by Dignam was not to be repeated. If there was a second plot, let Administration come forward like men and make their accusations. Stormont said "his words were round, plain and direct"—"he alluded to a sort of intercourse carried on between this country and France, since the commencement of hostilities, which he feared was attended with very mischievous consequences —an intercourse carried on as if the two countries were at peace." He did not mean "treasonable correspondence." Shelburne was not satisfied—to whom did Stormont allude? Stormont for a long time refused to answer—he wished the House to think he had information. Rockingham, Coventry, and Richmond insisted on his answering. He refused—taking care to add, that when he was Ambassador the prints published in this country, and the speeches in that House, never failed to do mischief. Grafton and Manchester demanded an answer. Lord Chancellor Thurlow pretended to see nothing more applicable to Richmond than to

[1] George Grenville, son of the Minister. He succeeded his uncle (who died from a carriage accident) in 1779.

any other man in the kingdom. Again Rockingham demanded that Stormont should tell them whether he knew of any traitors. After a long struggle Stormont at last said he did not! This was the sort of weapon and the sort of friend that Administration relied on.

CHAPTER XC

THE RECAPTURE OF PARLIAMENT

"When folly, infatuation, delusion, incapacity and profligacy fling a nation away, and it concurs itself, and applauds its destroyers, a man who has lent no hand to the mischief and can neither prevent nor remedy the mass of evils, is fully justified in sitting aloof, and beholding the tempest rage, with silent scorn and indignant compassion."—WALPOLE.

DUNNING'S Motion for an Address to the King was delayed on account of the Speaker's illness, and did not come on till the 24th of April. It prayed the King neither to dissolve nor prorogue Parliament until proper measures had been taken "to diminish the influence, and correct the abuses, complained of by the Petitions of the people." Dunning referred to Hillsborough's speech in the Lords (on the Contractors' Bill), about a "frenzy of public virtue"—"virtue run mad," and that the Lords ought now to stand in the gap between the people and the Crown. If the Lords did, he would leave the consequences to their imaginations. Thomas Pitt implored the House not to disappoint "the budding confidence" of the people. At a meeting of gentry, clergy, and freeholders of the County of Cambridge, on the 10th, it had been resolved not at present to form an association, because Parliament was going to make a reform. Nugent said he should vote against the motion, "because it smelt too strongly of 1641." He proposed to tax those who held pensions for life. The most important speech was made by Adam. It was long and able, but its main idea was the vicious old view that representatives of the people were under no obligation to "obey" their constituents—the direct consequence of his reasoning being, that the House need not pay much attention to the Petitions. This most mischievous view was held in the later years of the Long Parliament, and it had then the result which it inevitably must have, of making representation a sham, and Parliament a vast, irresponsible oligarchy.

Fox made a great speech, almost entirely in answer to Adam. Adam had asked how much influence the Petitions ought to have in *that* House—the question was answered by the Resolutions of the 6th of April. Adam had said that tests to candidates were unconstitutional—they had only been adopted in four[1] places—but suppose they were general? Do not those who vote for members of Parliament want to know the opinions of those they elect? Suppose the question were the American war? Would it be unreasonable for the elector to ask whether the person he was to vote for was for or against that war? Adam had said much about "the miseries of the last century, and the unhappy times of Charles I"—if that misguided monarch had listened to the petitions of his people the dreadful scene that ensued would have been avoided. The vote of the 6th of April, "that glorious vote which established a foundation for liberty," could not be carried out without agreeing to the present motion. The 233 who voted for it pledged themselves in the most solemn manner to redress the grievances complained of in the Petitions. They had entered into a bond with the people of England. As for infringing on the King's prerogative, the motion acknowledged it. It was absurd to say that Parliament might continue sitting two years together—Parliament must needs die a natural death in October, 1781, and it was only asked that Parliament should sit till the abuses were corrected.

The illness of the Speaker had had a fatal effect—it not only gave the irresolute time to cool—it gave Ministers ten days in which to *bring* back deserters. When the division was taken, the motion was lost by 254 to 203—the County members had *turned round*.

A scene followed. When members came back from the division, Dunning moved to defer the consideration of the Petitions for a week. The House began to thin—"particularly from the Opposition side," when Fox rose. He was in a white heat.[2] He said he had never felt so hurt, mortified, and indignant, as that night—so much so, that he had determined nevermore to enter that House while the majority entertained such sentiments as had produced the vote just given. But as his learned friend (Dunning) had adjourned the Committee on the Petitions, he would make one more trial, out of respect for his learned friend and other gentlemen, and also to give those gentlemen who had separated from their friends an opportunity of declaring their

[1] Yorkshire, Middlesex, Surrey, and the City of Westminster.

[2] It is said that Fox shrieked, and foamed at the mouth.

real sentiments—for he did not think it possible that those who supported the Resolutions of the 6th April should thus desert their principles. It was a scandalous, treacherous, and disgraceful vote! (Here the Treasury Bench called him to order.) He did not mean to say it was scandalous in those who opposed the vote of the 6th—they acted consistently—like men. The 215 gentlemen who then declared that the influence of the Crown was not increased, and ought not to be diminished, had pursued an open course—they said what they thought. But who could contemplate without surprise and indignation the conduct of another set of men, who resolved that the influence of the Crown ought to be diminished, and on the only two occasions that offered, shamefully fled, and broke their solemn engagement to their constituents? It was shameful, it was base, it was unmanly, it was treacherous! The gentlemen he alluded to surrounded him (they had come back); they sat on his side of the House; he was sorry for it. They voted with him on the 6th, and with the Minister to-night! At least, the followers of the Minister had not taken him in with false hopes. He might think the man servile whom he saw cringing and bowing at the Minister's levée—but those who affected different principles and yet supported the Minister filled him with horror! He was at a loss for words to express his feelings. He had been taken in, deluded, imposed on! (Here Ministerialists laughed.) Then he denounced the County members as the chief offenders. No doubt they had their reasons for voting one way one day and another way the next. Probably the last vote represented their real sentiments, and the first was to please their constituents. We were on the eve of a general election, when the first question their constituents would ask them, would be, "What have you done about our petitions? Have our burdens been lightened? Have you made a reform in the King's Household?" "No—but look at the resolutions of the 6th of April—you will see that we voted that the influence of the Crown ought to be diminished, and we also resolved that it was our duty to redress your grievances." Votes meant worse than nothing when abandoned the instant they were given. After Monday next he should absent himself from that House. He would make one more trial—if that failed he would exert himself without those walls, instead of within them. He would quit the House, and leave Ministers to be responsible for the consequences. ("A great cry of Hear! hear!") He knew gentlemen who cried "Hear! hear!" would be glad. If they thought he would try to make confusion, they were mistaken—the people had constitutional

resources left. The Constitution was not so imperfect that we must take up arms to defend our rights.

When at last Fox ceased, North rose. He had never been more astonished in his life! He had thought of calling the hon. gentleman to order, but did not wish to provoke an altercation at that late hour. To call a majority of the House base! scandalous! treacherous! It would be wrong to apply these epithets to a single member. No provocation could justify such language. It was disorderly, because we ought to talk like gentlemen. The hon. gentleman happened to be in a majority one night, and in a minority another, and was displeased. The hon. gentleman was so used to vote in a minority that he seemed quite offended at being for once in a majority. This was rather unreasonable. He himself was quite as much accustomed to vote in a majority as the hon. gentleman, but on the particular night he was obliged to submit. He did not rise and, in the anguish of defeat and disappointment, accuse those who had often voted with him of treachery. He advised the hon. gentleman not to be so hasty —some day he might again be in a majority. The hon. gentleman supposed that because the House refused to ask his Majesty to prolong Parliament indefinitely, the petitioners were to have no redress. Nothing had suggested a sudden prorogation or dissolution. Fox repeated that he meant it was scandalous that those who voted for the motion of the 6th had now turned round —they were bound to carry out the vote of the 6th.

But the tide of battle had been turned back—Parliament had been recaptured for the King.[1]

On April 27 Lord George Gordon came with another Petition against the Growth of Popery—this time from Ayrshire. He made a strange rambling speech, about Charles I, James II, and Ferdinando Dada, the Pope's Nuncio—whom the Duke of Somerset of that day refused to introduce, "but the Duke of Grafton did the job." He should not wonder if another Ferdinando Dada came and took his seat in that House—*in pontificalibus*. Then he got upon corruption. Lord Chatham had said a title would make a man do anything. He had heard a noble lord wanted to buy the Speaker a title. He advised the

[1] The Speaker was suspected of shamming illness to oblige the Court, but Walpole appears uncertain whether the illness "was most timely to the Court or the Opposition. The Court wanted time . . . on the other hand, the next was a Newmarket week, whither several of the young patriots would have gone, and others wanted to be present at the Committee of their Counties."—WALPOLE. The King thought the Speaker's illness was "to enable Opposition to pursue their amusement at Newmarket."—Letter of April 15.

Speaker not to accept it. Lord Chatham was sunk by a title. "Don't, Mr. Speaker, be cozen'd by a title!" He was called to order, but rose again and again.

On the 28th there was another debate on Burke's Bill—upon the clause for abolishing the offices of the Great Wardrobe, the Removing Wardrobe, the Master of the Robes, "the office called the Jewel Office," etc., except one housekeeper and one wardrobe-keeper in each of his Majesty's palaces.

Burke said he had found two kinds of palaces—real and ideal—the ideal having "no existence but in the intellects." On examining the Red Book, he found the list of housekeepers headed by Lady Mary Churchill, "and she was followed by a whole heap of petticoats." As he was glad there should be some respectable establishment for women of condition, he determined not to meddle with one of them. But he received eight letters, begging him not to abolish the places of housekeepers to the palaces, and among others one from Haverford-West stated that John Manners, Esq., was housekeeper at Whitehall. He again referred to the Red Book, for before he had thought it was an error for "Joan Manners." At last, after brushing aside the crowd of hoop-petticoats, he espied John Manners, Esq. He immediately went to Whitehall, which he found was one of the ideal palaces. All he saw there were several paintings of nudities in the Banqueting House, by Peter Paul Rubens, and a painter busy with them, improving the works of that great master. He saw no housekeeper, nor any occasion for one, though John Manners, Esq., was paid better than £500 a year.

Nugent said the hon. gentleman's feelings when he saw the painter attempting to correct Rubens were exactly what he himself felt when he saw the Bill. No doubt the painter would have said he was a reformer. The Constitution was the work of great masters—we shall only spoil their work. Burke very neatly rejoined that the same thing moved him which moved the painter to re-touch the almost invisible touches of Rubens—the necessity of the times. He had an invidious task—he would much rather have proposed to build his Majesty still more splendid palaces than to abolish places in his Household. He then enumerated the duties of the Great Wardrobe, amidst roars of laughter from the House. The first articles were for coronations and funerals—he hoped there would be no occasion for them for many, many years to come. His Majesty was blessed with a vigorous and healthy constitution, and probably no gentleman present would live to see a coronation.

Mr. Gilbert had talked very pathetically about great funerals—Burke thought them in general great follies. Sometimes, indeed, when the nation wished to do honour to a deserving character, they were proper, and even necessary. He had seen one such; and there, indeed, he must do the Great Wardrobe the justice to say that they had been rigidly economical. "So economical, that the cloaks were short, scanty, and threadbare, and no scarfs, nor hardly anything necessary." Perhaps this was a stroke of policy—the Wardrobe knew the Minority would be the chief attendants at that funeral, and meant to show that one public office, at least, attended to their doctrines of economy.

Then came the clothing of the State-trumpeters—he supposed these were the writers for Government! He understood, however, that the noble lord in the blue ribbon had, to save expense, contracted for them to write by the gross. "So much for the work done for the Crown. And now let us see what is done for the people." The Great Wardrobe furnishes the House of Commons and the House of Lords—with living figures, sometimes rather costly.

Conway cited the example of Louis XVI, who began his economies with his own expenses—in his Household only he had saved near a million livres annually. But all was of no use. These offices were retained by 210 to 162. And then the Board of Works was retained by a great majority.

On May 1st North proposed for Commissioners of Accounts, Sir Guy Carleton, Mr. Thomas Bowlby, Comptroller of the Army Accounts——

Here he was interrupted by Mr. Byng, who with great indignation insisted that only one person should be nominated at a time. The debate was one of the most disorderly and bitter in Parliamentary annals. Townshend said this was of a piece with making a clerk the Colonel of a regiment—now a General was made an accountant. Dunning reminded North that he did not use to favour General Carleton—nor had his satellites ever "shot off" in his honour. After several other members had spoken, Sir Fletcher Norton said it was an extraordinary way of complying with the Petitions, and diminishing the influence of the Crown, to create new place-men at the nomination of the Minister. Fox compared North to Hortensius defending Verres. At two in the morning the attempt of Opposition to adjourn the debate failed. Fox said members were ineligible, but place-men were to be appointed—both these gentlemen were place-men. No one had a better opinion of Bowlby than he—it was the principle. He was a place-man, appointed to his place by North, and holding it

at pleasure. North offered to make the office tenable at pleasure. Nothing was decided that night. Finally, the Bill passed, and all that Opposition got was the exclusion of Bowlby, to whom they had no personal objection.

Every now and then Opposition would ask what had become of America, and at last, on the 5th of May, Conway moved a Bill for Quieting the Troubles in America. It proposed to concede all the rights, privileges, and immunities which the Colonies had demanded in their petitions to the King and Parliament—and particularly in the Petition of Congress to the King, and the Memorial of New York to the Lords of the 25th of March, 1775; and in the Remonstrance of the General Assembly of New York to the House of Commons, of the same date. The claim to propose taxes was to be given up, the powers of the Admiralty Courts restrained within their former limits; and no one was to be sent for trial to any other colony, nor to Great Britain. The Judges to hold their salaries as in England. The obnoxious Acts—including the Quebec Act—were to be repealed, and a free pardon and perpetual amnesty to be granted. Commissioners were to be appointed. It was well-intended. Nugent seconded it—though he did not like all it contained. Eden thought it seemed too eager—a gratuitous offer looked like weakness. Lord George Gordon made a very sensible speech—perhaps the most sensible that day—for he told the House that the Commissioners would go on a fool's errand unless they went empowered to offer independence. He spoke of his visit to America in 1766–69—he was treated with the utmost hospitality, "they considering me as a youth of rank from England, who might one day be sent to them as one of their governors." He had been in the house of all the principal people in the thirteen provinces, and had always seen the most rooted marks of affection and loyalty. Those who pretended that independence was their object from the beginning had deceived Parliament. Governor Pownall said America was already an independent sovereign Power, supported as such by other Powers, and the proposal to repeal any of our laws regarding her seemed to him like a proposal to repeal the laws on our statute-books about Gascony and Poitou. Fortunately for the dignity of this country the Bill was lost.

At the beginning of April there had been a great meeting of the Westminster Electors. On May 8 Sir William Meredith called the attention of the House to some extraordinary reports, and moved for information as to any Requisitions made by the

Civil Magistrate, for any of the horse or foot-guards ordered to be in readiness from the 5th to the 7th of April last. After some shuffling, Jenkinson admitted that the Magistrates, "expecting a riot," had made such a requisition; whereupon Burke said the Justices of Middlesex were "generally the scum of the earth; carpenters, brick-makers, and shoe-makers"; some of them notoriously men of such infamous characters that they were unworthy of any employ whatever—others so ignorant they could not write their own names. The meeting of the 6th of April was most respectable—the Dukes of Devonshire and Portland, and other distinguished personages, met the other electors of Westminster, in a legal and constitutional manner, to discuss great constitutional points. How dared "such reptiles" as the Middlesex Justices attempt to call out the military? Rigby defended the measure, but by implication admitted Burke's description of the Justices, for he said that "the office was a very troublesome one, and no person of distinction or family would undertake it"; and therefore it was right to give "douceurs to those that would." What the "douceurs" were he did not explain. Burke charged Rigby with defending those with whom he would not sit down to dinner—to whom he would not speak, nor suffer to be in a room where he was. Eden talked about general principles, and unreasonable suspicions; and Fox said, if a set of men were to be let loose on constitutional meetings, those who attended must go armed! In less than a month from that day this extraordinary account of the Justices was to receive an unpleasant illustration.

The House then considered Alderman Sawbridge's motion for Shortening the Duration of Parliaments. Fox said that he had always opposed this measure, but now intended to vote for it. It was originally meant to defeat the aims of the Pretender, by keeping together a Parliament well-disposed to the House of Brunswick. But now the case was different. Annual Parliaments would lessen the influence of the Crown—the first, second, and third cause of our misfortunes. Burke, on the contrary, thought they would increase it. Independence is the grand object. If, every three years, "the exhausting sluices of entertainments, drinkings, open houses, to say nothing of bribery, are to be periodically renewed, and government favours are to be called for, every trace of independence will be borne down by the torrent." He did not seriously think that even the wrecks of this Constitution could survive five triennial elections. The expense of the last General Election was computed at £1,500,000.

About the close of the last Parliament, and the beginning of this, he remembered that the agents said, "Sir, your election will cost you £3000 if you are independent; but if the ministry supports you, it may be done for two, and perhaps for less."

"What will be the consequence of triennial corruption, triennial drunkenness, triennial idleness, triennial lawsuits, litigations, prosecutions, triennial phrenzy, of society dissolved, industry interrupted, ruined? . . . I think no stable and useful advantages were ever made by the money got at elections by the voter, but all he gets is doubly lost to the public. . . . So was Rome destroyed by the disorders of continual elections, though those of Rome were sober disorders. . . . Yet Rome was destroyed by the frequency and charge of elections, and the monstrous expense of an unremitted courtship of the people." Some, I know, think the frequency of the evil would be a remedy —sitting but for a short time the member would not find it worth while to spend so much. I answer that experience is against this. We have had triennial Parliaments; at no time were seats more eagerly contested.

It was a long and learned speech. Even if we think that some of the external circumstances which told against the old triennial Parliaments do not now exist, we may see a danger not touched on by Burke—the danger that, though bribery might become difficult or impossible, too frequent elections would lose all interest for the general public, and members might be elected almost by default. The motion was lost by 90 to 182.

Some light is shed on the subsequent debate of May 18 by the beginning of it — an altercation about the exclusion of strangers. Hartley complained of this — the people were peculiarly interested at this time in the conduct of their representatives, and it was neither fair nor decent to shut them out. It produced a bad impression out of doors, and did no good within. Temple Luttrell said this new enforcing of the order against strangers would make people think the House was employed in a business of too dark a kind to meet the eye of day. However, if the order was persisted in, he pledged himself to take care the public should know what was done within those walls! And if one standing order was to be enforced, to the prejudice of their constituents, he would move for the enforcing of another, by which means the Speaker would be obliged to come down to the House at ten in the morning, and business would take infinitely longer than at present.

Norton said a member had moved to have the standing

order read; and however much inclined he might be to the contrary, he was obliged to order the gallery to be cleared.

Then the House went into Committee once more—it was for the last time—on Burke's ill-starred Establishment Bill. The Clause was that for abolishing the offices of Master of the Buckhounds, Foxhounds, and Harriers. It was lost. Every Clause was lost, until Alderman Sawbridge said that ever since the vote of the 6th of April the influence of the Crown had been in a progressive state of increase. A majority of 233 gentlemen had admitted the fact of that influence, but they disapproved of the conclusion — "that it ought to be diminished" — every vote since had been a refusal to diminish it. When measures were proposed the next week, some absented themselves. But this was only "the forerunner." The Speaker's illness caused a recess of a few days, during which the Minister brought over "persons of a doubtful description," so successfully, that when the House met again he had a decided majority—so that in the space of a few days influence had increased more than in any former period in as many months. "The magic touch of a Minister" had at once demolished what the friends of the country had been toiling to effect during the session. "The accursed system which directed the affairs of this country was on the very point of dissolution, when by the art and management of the noble lord it was established upon a firmer and more permanent basis than ever."

North rose "with great warmth," and called Sawbridge to order. He defied him to prove that he had employed the influence of the Crown in an improper manner, or tried to corrupt a single individual, since he took office. Then he went off into "his usual strain of pleasantry." He hinted that the majority of the 6th had perceived on mature reflection the improper use that was intended to be made of their vote. It was not necessary to suppose corruption—it was much more likely that men did not think themselves bound to act wrong always because they had done so once.

Rous answered him, and accused him of having, "with his usual dexterity," evaded the charge. But it required another kind of answer. The noble lord had sometimes triumphed by "blustering, and flat contradictions, and vociferous calls to order"; but often by turning the gravest subjects into ridicule. The burning of a town, the loss of a province, the blood of thousands, the waste of millions—though not a very old member, he had heard all these subjects treated as "a very apt thesis for

humour or epigrammatic points." But America being far off, the fate of the captured army decided, the blood spilt, no harm could result from the noble lord "giving a vent to that witty vein which was so natural to him." But here the charge was personal. What did it import? It accused the noble lord of corrupting members of that House to obtain a majority to defeat the Petitions of a great majority of electors, and a still greater majority of the people at large. If the charge was not true, why did not the noble lord insist on having the words taken down? This was the regular parliamentary proceeding—not rude and indecent contradiction in one part of his speech, and attempts at ill-timed ridicule at another. He himself knew the charge to be true, and the noble lord knew that he could prove it. Sawbridge, in the most unqualified terms, maintained his assertion — that during the Speaker's illness the noble lord had "influenced or corrupted" several of the majority of April 6—"more than that, he was convinced he had tampered with many." He dared North to take down his words; for though it might be difficult to prove the actual corruption, he was fully prepared to go into the actual proofs of the tampering—of offers being made. North said he defied his accusers to make any such charge good against him — if the hon. gentleman was so well informed, it was his business, as the accuser, to bring forward the charge. But he said nothing about taking down the words, which would have compelled a formal accusation.

And now Burke said he should divide the House no more on his Bill—he only wanted the clauses read and rejected, so that he might get rid of it, and it should be neither an eyesore to his enemies nor call for the tiresome and useless attendance of his friends. On this one half of the members quitted the House. A clause was read—it was for allowing a certain sum only to certain auditors, instead of the present salaries, perquisites, and fees. North said he liked the idea, and wished the clause postponed. Burke replied that his patience and spirits were both exhausted, and begged the favour of the noble lord to be so kind and merciful as to put an end to his sufferings, and negative this, as he had all the others. His plan, if carried out, would have saved the nation above a million sterling per annum, but it was hardly worth while to torture him further for the trifling saving of this unfortunate clause. North, however, insisted on postponing it.

Late at night on the 25th of May the news came of Rodney's action off Sta. Lucia on April 17, with the French under the

Count de Guichen. It was a curious despatch—the Admiral did not mention a single name as deserving of praise, nor did he say he was well supported—though he did say that de Guichen appeared to him to be a brave and gallant officer, and "had the honour to be nobly supported during the whole action"—which was another way of saying that he himself was not. The French suffered severely, but no ships were taken, and it was clear there was more behind.

In the fight of the 17th of April, 1780, Admiral Rodney had the experience, very rare in British naval history, of being ill-supported. It can hardly have surprised him. It was not the first time. On February 7 he had written to Lady Rodney from Gibraltar: "The Spanish men of war we have taken are much superior to ours. I own they surprise me. . . . Without a thorough change in naval affairs, the discipline of the navy will be lost. I could say much, but will not. You will hear of it from *themselves*. I have done them all like honour, but it was because I would not have the world believe that there were officers slack in their duty." This time he did not let them off so easily. He wrote in his despatch to the Admiralty: "It is with concern inexpressible, mixed with indignation, that the duty I owe my Sovereign and my country obliges me to acquaint your Lordships that during the action with the French fleet, on the 17th instant, his Majesty's and the British flag was not properly supported." This passage was suppressed in the *Gazette*, but enough was published to excite suspicion, and the truth leaked out. As for the general state of the Navy, Rodney's biographer, a strong Tory, says that if Rodney had not captured the Spanish ships he does not know what would have happened — these captures came so opportunely to supply us with ships! In a later despatch Rodney says that it would not do to bring all the defaulters to trial—and would, besides, be difficult in all cases to prove more than error of judgment. He selected two "whose misconduct appeared too manifest and notorious to be overlooked, having with my own eyes beheld their gross and notorious neglect of my orders, and inattention to my signals." This is the testimony of a ministerialist Admiral!

CHAPTER XCI

THE GORDON RIOTS

"Approach we now to the awful period when the sovereignty of the King, and the property of the subject, rested solely on laws unsupported, and magistrates confessedly intimidated; when the very existence of the state, its treasures, its splendour, its civil and military strength, depended on the whim that an unbridled multitude should take in the direction of the mischief they were about to perpetrate. . . . Had the Bank, Doctors-Commons, and the public offices, been the first objects of their fury, instead of Newgate, the Fleet, and the King's Bench prisons, let any rational mind figure to itself the confusion that must have ensued . . . by the annihilation of so many hundreds of millions of property, and the total abolition of all public credit!"—"Rise and Progress of the late Tumults," *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1780.

WHETHER the study of History is to leave us any wiser than before depends entirely on whether we study it with a view to discover why things happened as they did. To know merely what happened can teach us nothing, any more than a record of storms and earthquake can have any practical use, unless it is to form the basis of an enquiry into causes—or if we cannot discover the actual causes, at least of an enquiry into the sort of circumstances which usually precede these visitations.

The story of the Gordon Riots is a case in point. It is worth while to consider briefly how that extraordinary and disgraceful event was brought about.

After Culloden one great source of fear and unrest was removed, and with its removal many old political rancours began to die down. With this there was a moderate but steady movement towards a more real religious toleration—towards removing the many disabilities which were so odd a comment on our stock boasts of religious liberty. The movement gradually became strong enough to include even Catholics; and when Savile brought in his Bill in 1778, no one was found bold enough to argue in favour of allowing a Protestant son to drive his Catholic father, or his Catholic brother, out of the ancestral home. The

Catholics of Scotland had then expressed a hope that their turn would come, and had been promised that it should. A party in the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland had moved for a remonstrance, but to the honour of the Kirk it was rejected by a majority of more than one hundred. It was this vote which gave the Catholics courage to prefer their Petition.

What followed is one of the most extraordinary instances of the mischief which can be wrought by a few persons, working on the folly and ignorance of the many, when assisted by some long-standing prejudice. It would seem that the torch which touched the smouldering embers of persecution into a flame was "an inflammatory pamphlet," written by "a non-juring clergyman," printed at the expense of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and "circulated with great industry through every order of the people." It represented Catholics as "inimical to all states," and as "the common enemies of mankind." Its effects soon appeared in some of the provincial Synods. They began to pass angry resolutions against their unfortunate fellow-subjects and fellow-Christians, whom they had proscribed relentlessly for generations. They published these resolutions in the newspapers. The Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale was an honourable exception. Although it had a violent anti-Catholic party among its members, this Synod passed a resolution declining to take any part in opposing the intention of Government to give relief to its fellow-subjects.

And now began the work of the Committees—avowedly started to "protect" the National Church, as the clergy had "deserted the cause of God." They began in Edinburgh, and for a time worked in the dark—their names and numbers unknown. It appears that they were at first but thirteen. The principals among them were a merchant, a goldsmith, and "a teacher of the poor in a hospital." The rest were either men "exercising mean trades," or "writing-clerks," some in counting-houses, others in public offices—"excepting only the thirteenth, who being yet an apprentice, filled, notwithstanding, the important office of secretary to the committee." These people were the Central Committee; they got up committees of correspondence, received subscriptions, wrote letters to the papers, scattered handbills, and left no stone unturned to excite popular hatred and terror of the Catholics; until the latter, terrified at the spirit they saw rising against them, told Lord North that they would not ask for what had been promised them, and their letter was published in the papers. It seemed only to increase the fury of their enemies—they were

now insulted in the streets, threatened by enraged mobs, their windows were broken, and there was every sign of an impending riot. It should be remembered that no single unlawful act was even alleged against any Catholic, except the fact that he was "a papist," and as such must necessarily be a criminal of the deepest dye.[1]

It happened that there was a new house in Leith Wynd, in which lived several Catholic families, and also the principal Catholic priest in Edinburgh. Of late one floor of this house had been used as a chapel—but from the street it appeared like any other house. For more than a year it had been intended to use this room, instead of another, less commodious, in a private house in another part of Edinburgh; but the change was represented as a consequence of the indulgence about to be shown to Papists—a proof of the intolerable pride and daring of Popery, which at the first gleam of favour insulted the Protestant religion by erecting this pompous place of worship in the face of the metropolis. Handbills were thrown about the streets, calling on the people to assemble in Leith Wynd, "and pull down the Pillar of Popery lately erected there." The date fixed was a day or two later, but the Magistrates took no steps to guard the house, and on the appointed evening (February 2, 1779) the mob set the house on fire with such effect that it burned till next day. The inmates with difficulty escaped with their lives. Meanwhile another mob destroyed the "Old Chapel"—a house inhabited by families of tradespeople. Everything was destroyed, including a large library belonging to the Catholic Bishop. The mob then burned or destroyed the stock in trade of two or three Catholic tradesmen—they were very few in number, and mostly very poor. This went on for several days—a foretaste of what was to happen in London. At last the mob bethought them of more important offenders—the supporters of the Catholic Relief Bill. They went to the College Green, to pull down Dr. Robertson's house; but the Magistrates—who had not interfered to save the poor Catholic tradesmen—instantly sent the Dragoons to protect the Principal of the University of Edinburgh—the great historian, the leader of the General Assembly, and a Chaplain to the King. They sent for a regiment of Fencibles, and drew chains across the streets. The mob pelted the soldiers, and grievously wounded several. At last, after the riot had continued from Wednesday to Saturday, the Lord Provost issued a proclamation promising that the laws against Papists should not be repealed, and calling the riots the "appre-

[1] See the account in the *Annual Register* for 1780.

hensions of well-meaning people." On this the well-meaning people went home.

In March Lord George Gordon told the House that the concessions to Papists had alarmed all Scotland—"he did not speak his own sentiments only; Government should find 120,000 men at his back." Now, on the 5th of May, he made another speech, regarded at the time as the mere vapouring of a fanatic, but in one month more to be translated into smoke and flame. He was presenting a Petition from Plymouth; already a good many petitions against the Catholics lay upon the table. He began by saying that Scotland was ripe for insurrection—the inhabitants—"a few Roman Catholics excepted"—were ready to "resist the powers of Government," and "had invited him to be their leader, or privy-counsellor." The people of Scotland took the ground that no power on earth was competent to break the conditions on which the Union took place—and one of these conditions was the religious establishment. This seemed to include the privilege of oppressing Papists; for Gordon went on to read two motions—

1. That, it appearing to this House that the people of Scotland are being justly and constitutionally alarmed at the encouragement given to Popery by the King's recommendation to this House of a petition from the Popish Lords, Linto, and the Bishop of Daulis; and by the repeated assurance, both public and private, that whatever was granted last year to the English Catholics shall be extended to Scotland; This House resolves that, to quiet these just alarms, the said Popish Petition shall be thrown over the table.

2. That all further proceedings on the said Petition shall be postponed to this day three months.

But as no one would second these motions, the Speaker declined to put them to the House.

Gordon had now been sowing to the wind for a long time; London was to reap the whirlwind. On the 29th of May there was a great meeting of the Protestant Association, at Coachmakers' Hall, with Gordon in the chair. He read them extracts from a Popish catechism just published, and an indulgence granted by the Pope that year, and bade them see from this what alarming progress Popery was making. The only way to stop it was to go "in a firm and resolute manner" to the House, and show their representatives that they meant to preserve their religious freedom with their lives. He would run all hazards with them; but if they were too lukewarm to run all hazards with him, they might get another President—for he would tell them candidly, he was not a

lukewarm man himself, and if they meant to spend the time in mock debate, they might get another President. He moved that the whole body of the Association should meet next Friday, the 2nd of June, in St. George's Fields, and go with him to present the Petition—he would not go with less than 20,000. They were to go in four divisions—the Protestants of the City of London on the right; those of the City of Westminster on the left; the Borough of Southwark, third; and the Scots resident in London, fourth.[1] And that they might know their friends from their enemies, they were all to wear blue cockades. He issued advertisements and handbills, to say that, as no hall in London could hold 40,000 persons, they must assemble in St. George's Fields, at ten o'clock in the morning, to consider the most respectful way of presenting the Petition. He requested the Magistrates to attend.

It might have been supposed that Ministers, who a month ago had taken such prompt measures to prevent the Duke of Portland, the Duke of Richmond, and the Duke of Devonshire, from getting up a dangerous demonstration, would have taken alarm this time also. Lord George's eccentricities had *long* been the laughing-stock of the House of Commons, and Ministers who *do* not know that eccentricity with 40,000 fanatics behind it is dangerous, are not fit to be entrusted with the maintenance of public order. But they did nothing; and on Friday the people began to assemble, marshalling themselves in ranks, and waiting for their leader. About eleven he arrived, and about twelve they moved. One body went round by London Bridge, another over Blackfriars, and a third followed Lord George himself over Westminster. The Petition—as much as one man could carry—was borne before them. They were perfectly orderly, and at about half-past two they were all assembled in front of the Houses of Parliament, where they gave "a general shout."

It is impossible to discover from the accounts how, and at what precise moment, disorder began. It would seem, however, that the mob were excited by seeing members go into the House —especially such as had voted for the Catholic Relief Bill. They began to demand that these gentlemen should put blue cockades in their hats, and cry "No Popery!"[2] They even made some

[1] Many came from the Provinces. The present writer was told, some twenty-five years ago, by a hospital nurse, that her own grandfather—then a young man of thirty—came up from Lancashire to join in the demonstration. He was never seen alive again.

[2] In the first days of riot the Secretary of State's servants went about with the cockades in their hats as a passport.

of them swear to vote for the repeal of the Bill. By this time they had got possession of all the avenues to both Houses, and were up to the very doors. In vain Alderman Sawbridge tried to persuade them to clear the Lobby. The Chaplain to the House, standing at the top of the gallery stairs, exhorted them "in a pathetic manner" to go home, and not injure a good cause. Lord Mahon was haranguing them from the leads of the House of Peers. When North came they would hardly let him up the stairs—members of the Protestant Association stopped him, and tried to make him promise to "support the Protestant Cause, as conducted by Lord George Gordon." They groaned at Germaine, and threw porter in his face.

Meanwhile the author of the demonstration had presented the Petition, and had told the House that nearly 120,000 of his Majesty's Protestant subjects had signed it. Alderman Bull seconded the motion for it to be read.

All things considered — the entire lack of provocation, the supposed progress of enlightenment—the loud professions of a desire for religious liberty—the Petition of the Protestant Association is one of the most shocking documents in the dismal records of religious persecution.

It began by complaining of the repeal of those infamous statutes, the 11th and 12th of William III, which tempted a child to denounce his own father, his own brother, that he might enjoy the inheritance. It alleged that the Papists had construed this "indulgence" into a toleration of Popery—as appeared by the mass-houses and schools they were opening throughout the kingdom, and by their printing popish books and publicly exposing them for sale. Popish bishops, priests, Jesuits, and schoolmasters now openly exercised their functions; Papists can now purchase what lands they please, and so can influence elections; Protestants are in danger of perjuring themselves when they make oath that "no foreign prince, prelate, or potentate, hath any jurisdiction in this kingdom." The Petition ended with the singularly malapropos remark that Popery is in its nature intolerant.

Lord George moved that the House should instantly take this Petition into consideration. Again Bull seconded, and a debate began, during which the conduct of Lord George Gordon himself, and of the House in allowing it, was more extraordinary than all the rest. He came several times to the top of the stairs, "and let the mob know the bad success their petition was like to meet with." The first time he told them it was proposed to consider it on Tuesday — but he did not like delays — Parliament might be

prorogued by then. He came again, and told them there was little hope of redress, but they must trust in Providence. The third time he said, "Gentlemen, the alarm has gone forth for many a mile round the city. You have got a very good prince, who, as soon as he hears the alarm has seized such a number of people, will no doubt send private orders to his Ministers to enforce the prayer of the petition." Not content with this, he called out to them the names of the members who were opposing the instant consideration of the Petition—"especially Mr. Burke, the member for Bristol." Conway and others remonstrated with him very warmly, but in vain. His cousin, Colonel Gordon, went out to him, and swore that the moment one of "his rascally adherents" entered the House he would run *Lord George* through the body. Another relative, General Grant, begged him, for God's sake, not to lead these poor people into danger. "See!" said the poor fanatic, "what efforts are made to persuade me from my duty!"

When it came to the vote, the Yeas could not go forth on account of the tumultuous crowd in the Lobby. The Sergeant-at-Arms reported that he was unable to clear it, and the Speaker sent him for the magistrates of Middlesex and Westminster. After some time they came, and the Speaker told them it was their duty to preserve the peace, and for this purpose they had authority to call out the whole force of the County. It seems to have been now that Justice Addington came up at the head of a party of horse and foot. He was received with hisses, but on his assuring the petitioners that if they would give their honour to disperse, he would order the soldiers away, about 600 of them gave three cheers and departed.

The Sergeant-at-Arms reported the Lobby cleared, and the Yeas went forth.

It is satisfactory to learn that only 6 members voted with Gordon;[1] 192 refused to consider a petition while an armed force was at the doors. The House then adjourned till Tuesday the 6th of June.

The Lords fared far worse than the Commons. The mob stopped the carriage of the venerable Lord President Bathurst, pulled him out very roughly, and kicked his legs—with great difficulty he got into the House. They threw mud in Mansfield's face, and dishevelled his wig; the glasses of his carriage were broken and the panels beaten in. Stormont's carriage was smashed to pieces, and he was in the hands of the mob for nearly half an hour. Mr. Charles Turner's carriage was smashed (Fox's old

[1] They were Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, Sir Michael la Fleming, Sir James Lowther, Earl Verney, Mr. Polhill, and Mr. Tollemache.

friend). The Archbishop of York had his lawn sleeves torn off and flung in his face. The Bishop of Rochester (who was taken for him) was being severely handled, when one of the mob asked him if he was not once schoolmaster of Westminster? On his replying No, a man in the crowd called out that Dr. Markham was a taller man—if this had been Markham he should have been marked with a cross on his forehead![1] The Bishop of Lincoln very narrowly escaped with his life. His carriage was accidentally stopped—he resented this—a ruffian pulled him out and throttled him till blood came from his mouth. His carriage was broken to pieces. Fortunately the Bishop was got into the house of "a Mr. Atkinson, an attorney," close by. There he fainted. Atkinson helped him change his clothes, and got him out on the roof, and in at the garret-window of another house. The mob broke into Atkinson's, and hunted for the Bishop—it was said there were thirty of these wretches in the house at one time, searching. The Duke of Northumberland had "a gentleman in black" with him in his carriage—there was a cry that this was a Jesuit. The Duke was pulled out, and in the scuffle lost his watch and purse. Hillsborough was saved by Lord Townshend, and both got into the House with the loss only of their bag-wigs. Lord St. John—whose brother fell in Rodney's action of the 17th of April—was ill-used. Sandwich escaped by the presence of mind of his coachman, who suddenly whipped his horses round and drove his master back to the Admiralty before he was much hurt. Poor little Welbore Ellis, the smallest man in the Commons, was pursued into the Guildhall of Westminster—the windows there were broken, and Justice Addington and all the constables were "expelled."

The Duke of Richmond was making his promised motion for annual Parliaments and reform of representation.[2] He felt "exceedingly unhappy" at having to do so at such a moment. He had been charged with being too ready to support the claims of the people—he had been called a "leveller," because he took delight in reformation, but no noble lord who heard him disapproved more highly of the riotous proceedings now going on in Palace Yard. (The howls of the mob could be distinctly heard.) But he did delight in reformation—and it had become necessary—

[1] Markham had been tutor to the Prince of Wales. He had once written to Burke that his house was a hole of adders—upbraiding him—a man of his condition—with his insolence in ill-treating the "first men of the Kingdom."

[2] ". . . that plaguing fellow, the Duke of Richmond. If there were two Dukes of Richmond in this country, I would not live in it."—*Jenkinson to Robinson*, July 21, 1780. (*Abergavenny Papers*, p. 31.)

the Constitution was "daily impairing, and government becoming more corrupt." His plan was not to level distinctions, but to distinguish them clearly—he believed distinctions were ordained by Providence, for the wisest purposes, but he was an enemy to the present system—it tended to make the King's will the rule of Government—a system said to have originated in circumstances which happened towards the close of the late reign, when Ministers had rendered themselves so justly popular that "the King was in fact a servant"; the Minister possessed everything but the title of king, and the King was little more than a Dutch Stadtholder, or a Doge of Venice. Fear of another such situation had given rise to the present system; and certainly if the present Administration dreaded the power likely to be obtained by men of great talents, experience, and integrity, they had avoided this danger by carefully selecting the weakest, most servile, and most unpopular. He begged pardon for this digression—but the best way of setting limits to the power of the Crown was by annual Parliaments, and adding a hundred members—knights of the shire—to counterbalance the dead weight of the rotten boroughs. Every man in the kingdom, of full age, and not disqualified by law, must be represented——

At this moment he was interrupted by Lord Montfort, and, thinking the interruption was intended to be vexatious, was indignant. But Montfort begged his pardon, and assured him he meant no offence—but Lord Boston was in the hands of the mob outside—they had dragged him out of his coach, and were most cruelly maltreating him—Montfort thought he would be killed if not speedily assisted. Richmond and Townshend proposed they should go in a body and rescue him—Mansfield said he would go at their head. Just then "Lord Boston entered in a piteous condition; no hat, no bag, his hair dishevelled, and his clothes loose." One peer after another entered, "some with their hair about their shoulders, others smutted with dirt, most of them as pale as the ghost in Hamlet, and all of them standing up in their places, and speaking at the same instant. One lord proposing to send for the guards; another for the justices; many crying out, Adjourn! Adjourn! while the skies resounded with the huzzas, shoutings, or hooting and hissings in the Palace-yard. This scene of unprecedented alarm continued for about half-an-hour."[1]

[1] Lord Boston got away by engaging his assailants in a dipute as to whether the Pope were Anti-Christ. While they were arguing this point he slipped away.—*Parliamentary History*, xxi. 669.

When the excitement had somewhat abated, the Duke of Gloucester proposed to send for the civil magistrates. Shelburne, with great warmth, denounced the conduct of Ministers, who must have expected a tumult from the advertisement which had appeared in several newspapers a day or two before. They were ready enough to call out the military the other day! What had they done now? Had they ordered the Justices to be out? Why had they done so much more than their duty then, and so much less now?

Hillsborough replied angrily that orders were sent to the Justices of Westminster, warning them of the mob of this day, and directing them to be ready to quell any tumult. The Opposition lords called out, "When?" Hillsborough, still angrily, said, "Yesterday, and if they wished he would try to ascertain the hour and minute." Mansfield sent Black Rod for Mr. Justice Wright. He appeared at the Bar, with another magistrate. Both declared they had received no such order! Wright said he was only there because he had come down to see if a disturbance was likely. He had collected all the constables he could—but had only got six as yet—they were waiting at the Guildhall till more could be fetched, as so few could do no good. By order of the House, Mansfield directed him to go at once and collect all the force he could to disperse the mob.

As soon as Wright was gone, Richmond moved the adjournment. It was nine o'clock. The House "gradually thinned." Most of the lords went to the coffee-houses, or returned home in hackney-coaches. Some took advantage of the dusk of evening to walk home. It was a somewhat inglorious retreat, but they had shown considerable courage during the day. Their least courageous act was to leave Lord Mansfield, in his seventy-sixth year, to go home to Bloomsbury, protected only by the officers of the House and his own servants.

As soon as the House broke up the crowd dispersed, and "most of those who attended on a religious account" went home. But early in the evening it was plain that those who remained meant mischief. They divided themselves—one band went to Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, to the Chapel of the Sardinian Ambassador; the other to that of the Bavarian Ambassador, in Warwick Street, Golden Square. With little or no opposition they pulled down the altars and furniture, and committed everything to the flames—not sparing "the beautiful painting on the altar of the Sardinian Chapel, by the Chevalier

Casali, said to have cost £2500." A party of Guards was sent for, but arrived when the mischief was done. Thirteen persons were apprehended—the rest dispersed as soon as the soldiers appeared.

On Saturday, June 3, these thirteen persons were examined and recommitted. The day passed so quietly that everyone thought the trouble was over. They went on thinking so till Sunday afternoon.[1]

Then the mob began to collect in Moorfields, and "as it were in an instant"[2] a body of several thousands were crying, "No Papists!" "Root out Popery!" and making for the new Catholic chapel in Ropemakers' Alley. They broke into it, and into the school adjoining, brought out all the furniture, the altar, the images, pictures, seats, etc., and set fire to them in the street. The military, who were sent for, came—and looked on.[3] So did Lord Mayor Brackley Kennett, "with part of the civil power," and a great number of passive spectators. At half-past nine the Guards came, and the mob dispersed. There were a few accidents in this stampede, but no one was killed.

Early on Monday morning the mob collected again, and were "very riotous in Ropemakers' Alley, burning everything they had not burned the night before, and bringing out all furniture, and every piece of wood they could find" in the dwelling-houses "belonging to the Roman Catholic people," and burning them—even to the roofs of the buildings, and "a valuable library of books." In about an hour they had pulled down the schoolmaster's house, and then some thousands of them went off to Hoxton, where they had heard there was a Popish school.

The mob were now marching about with the trophies of the havoc they had wrought. A party went to Lord George Gordon's house in Welbeck Street, and burnt their trophies in front of it. Another went to Virginia Lane, Wapping; another to Nightingale Lane, East Smithfield. Those from Lord George's

[1] A letter of Mrs. Lloyd Kenyon, dated June 3, says: "The Attorney-General was very active last night in endeavouring to save the chapel, and was in great danger from the mob; they were so perverse, they would not help to work the engines to prevent the fire spreading." If some "gentlemen spectators" had not helped, most likely, great mischief might have been done; and the Guards were heard to say of the mob, "Great fools, why did they not pull down the building; fire might hurt their neighbours."

[2] See account in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

[3] Account given in the *Remembrancer*, x. 6.

house "gutted"[1] the house of Sir George Savile, in Leicester Fields—he had prepared and brought in the Catholic Relief Bill. At the other places they destroyed Catholic chapels, and houses and shops of Catholics.

As the 4th of June was a Sunday, the King kept his birthday to-day, and there was "a very splendid appearance" of nobility, gentry, and Ambassadors at Kew. There must have been a little awkwardness in receiving the congratulations of the Ambassadors on this occasion. In the afternoon the Lord Mayor was persuaded to go and read the Riot Act in Moorfields —protected by soldiers. A Proclamation was issued, offering £500 reward for discovering the persons who destroyed the chapels of the Embassies; the prisoners were re-examined, and three of them committed to Newgate. A large party of Guards held Bow Street during the examination, and escorted the rioters to the gaol. The mob pelted them, but the commanding officer would not fire, as the mob was unarmed.

In the evening the mob went to Mr. Rainsford's shop (a tallow-chandler's) in Stanhope Street, Clare Market, ransacked it from top to bottom, threw his furniture, stock of candles, cotton, etc., into the street, and set them on fire in different piles. Another party was burning the house of Mr. Maberley in Little Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and destroying his "fine new shop front." Both these persons had appeared against the prisoners examined that afternoon. Sir George Savile's house was burned at midnight. A party of Grenadiers dispersed the rioters before they had quite finished.

Burke and his wife were both out that evening—when at nine o'clock he heard that his own house was set down for the next after Savile's. He hurried to Charles Street, to secure his most important papers. But a file of sixteen soldiers came, and remained all night, and the Burkes were saved. In the morning Burke removed his books and furniture, and then told the soldiers to go where they could be of more use. He and Mrs. Burke then went to General Burgoyne's, where they remained till the riots were over.

Already, on the fourth day of this manner of "supporting the Protestant religion," the mob made mistakes. The party which went to Hoxton were bound for "Mr. Bridgewater's Academy," in Charles Square. When they charged him with being a Papist, he said he was a Protestant. "But you teach

[1] This word was used by the mob—it would almost seem that they introduced it in its new meaning.

the children Popish tenets?" "I teach the Old and New Testament, agreeable to the principles of the Church of England, as by law established." They asked if they might examine his house, "in a peaceable manner"? He allowed it, and seven of them went into every room. Luckily for him they discovered nothing suspicious, and the mob departed.

That morning a resolution of the Protestant Association had been circulated, entreating all true Protestants to show their attachment to "their best interest" by a legal and peaceable deportment. In the memoirs of the times we get glimpses of Lord George Gordon going about among the rioters, feebly and half-heartedly recommending orderly behaviour. Ministers did not dare arrest him.

What is the explanation of the attitude of Ministers? Was it sheer panic, and the same sort of incompetence which failed to provide ships with sails, and cannon with balls to fit? Or did they wish to make Opposition odious by acting on their principle of invoking only the civil magistrate? And were the civil magistrates genuinely afraid of being called to account, as were those who fired on young Allen in 1768?

It is hard to say. Harder still to account for the attitude of the great bulk of the citizens, who day after day looked on in silence while the mob burned the chairs and tables, and tore out the floors and wainscoting of unoffending Catholics. Had they such confidence that their own turn would never come?

During these four days — Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday — the Government and the whole City seemed to be paralysed.[1] If the rioters had had any plan, or any capable leader, the destruction of London by fire might have been the least catastrophe under an Administration so skilful at bribery and corruption, so incapable of governing by any other method. When we compare the attitude of Ministers towards America with their lenity to the Protestant Association, we are at a loss to account for the difference, unless we suppose that it is easier to show a bold front to offenders 3000 miles away. What were the riots at Boston to the Gordon Riots?

A greater crowd than ever assembled round the Houses of Parliament on Tuesday the 6th of June—they came in parties, by different ways. About half-past one several parties of Light Horse were stationed near the House, and the avenues were lined

[1] "During these four days, the Lords, Commons, Magistrates, and persons in power, of every denomination, in the great and populous cities of London and Westminster, seemed to be panic-struck."—*Gentleman's Magazine.*

with Guards; the doors of Westminster Hall were shut, and it was with great difficulty that members could enter the Houses.[1] Some came down with "No Popery" scrawled on their carriages, above the member's name. About three Sandwich had a narrow escape at the corner of Bridge Street, where the mob insisted he should turn back. The carriage windows were broken, and he was wounded by a stone. Colonel Smith[2] rescued him, and escorted him back to the Admiralty, whence he wrote to Lord Mansfield at the House. Their Lordships decided that they had better adjourn, "to a distant day"; and did so, after some recrimination with Opposition on the supineness of Ministers.

The Commons[3] declared that no act of theirs could be legal while the House was beset by an armed force; but they passed a few resolutions — one being for compensation to the sufferers. Lord George Gordon told them he believed if they would appoint a day to discuss the business the people would disperse. The day before he had disavowed the rioters, and had distributed the handbills recommending order. But to-day he had come to the House with a blue cockade in his hat! It was insisted that he should take it out. He did so. The House broke up about six o'clock, after adjourning to Thursday, and the two most awful days in all the history of London set in.

Early that evening Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Brooksbank, and another Magistrate for Middlesex, waited on Lord Mansfield in Bloomsbury Square, and found his lordship talking with his near neighbour, Dr. Markham, Archbishop of York. It was their painful duty to announce that the rioters meant that evening to destroy the houses of the Chief Justice, the Chancellor, and "one or two more." Some preparations were hastily made —guards were put into the vestry of Bloomsbury Church, ready to defend the Lord Chief Justice. The Chancellor got a sergeant's guard into his house in Great Ormond Street; by marching them from Ormond Street to the Duke of Bolton's, and back from Bolton House to Ormond Street, the Captain

[1] All the troops in London were on duty at the Tower, St. James', St. George's Fields, etc.

[2] Father of Admiral Sir Sydney Smith of Acre.

[3] About two hundred members attended. "Mr. Burke, they say, was in great danger this morning. He . . . went to ask the mob what they would have: 'If you want me,' he said, 'here I am; do what you will; but never expect I shall vote for a repeal of the Act I supported.' They all cried out, 'He is a gentleman, make way for him.'"—*Letter of Mrs. Kenyon*, June 6, 1780.

made the rioters take them for a much larger body. He also showed a few at the parlour windows, and caused someone to say audibly that they were ready to "pink" any who tried to enter. This and a few more such simple stratagems saved the Chancellor and the Duke. It also turned the whole attention of the rioters on Lord Mansfield, who unfortunately declined to take these precautions.

Lord and Lady Mansfield were actually in the house when the mob burst into the square; they escaped through a back door, only a few minutes before the front was broken in. The rioters tore down the doors, flung the splendid furniture into the street, and lighted large fires, in which they burned it. They threw Mansfield's great law library into the flames, with many manuscripts and deeds, and some valuable pictures. They had got into the cellar, and were distributing the wine among the mob, when the Guards arrived. A magistrate read the Riot Act, but the mob did not disperse. He ordered the soldiers to fire. About fourteen obeyed, and killed several men and women and wounded others. They were ordered to fire again —but this time no one was hit, and the rioters began to pull the house down, and burn the planks of the floors, the beams and "spurs"—then the stables and outhouses, till everything was consumed. Again soldiers, magistrates, and citizens looked on.[1]

Not one here showed the resource and daring of the Captain of a sergeant's guard at the house of the Chancellor. Meanwhile other bands destroyed houses of Catholics in Devonshire Street, Red Lion Square; another burnt out Justice Cox, in Great

[1] "What . . . is more incredible . . . is, that the noble house of Earl Mansfield, with all its elegant and costly furniture, its valuable paintings, and still more valuable books and manuscripts, should be forcibly entered and set on fire, in the sight of 2 or 300 soldiers, who stood tame spectators of the conflagration, no one magistrate daring to command their service."—*Gentleman's Magazine.*

Panic, however, seems to have been hardly the feeling as yet. Another letter of Mrs. Kenyon's, dated June 6, from Lincoln's Inn Fields, says: "We were waked last night, about twelve or near one, by a great light which proceeded from a fire in Great Wild Street. . . . The mob set a tallow chandler's in a flame, who had assisted to take one of the rioters on Thursday [query, Friday?] night. . . . I drank tea with Mrs. Walker yesterday; she is furious against Roman Catholics, and thinks it a sad thing to grant them any indulgences whatever." Protestants of the stamp of the Associators appear to have thought that Catholics positively incurred fresh guilt by having their houses burnt—no sort of pity seems to have been felt, and even the danger of the fire hurting themselves seems to have impressed them little.

Queen Street, and a third frightened the keeper of the New Prison at Clerkenwell into opening his gates and releasing his prisoners. The prisoners in the Fleet begged not to be turned out at that hour of the night, and the rioters kindly consented to wait till to-morrow to release them! Lord Petre's house in Park Lane, the houses of Messrs. Foster, Neal & Bevis, near Little Turnstile, Mr. Malo's near Moorfields, Mr. Doughty's in Devonshire Street, Mr. Lyon's in Bunhill Row, Mr. Charlton's in Coleman Street, and other houses of Catholics in obscurer parts of the town, were all burned this night. The mob was now in undisputed possession of London, Westminster, and the surrounding suburbs.

The author of the account in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (who says that his house "was at a small but equal distance from three dreadful fires, blazing at the same time") asks what the Corporation of London, the citizens of Westminster, and the inhabitants of Wapping were doing all this while? And answers that the Lord Mayor was showing the Court of Aldermen his correspondence with Lords Stormont and Hillsborough about quieting the disturbance; and all the rest of the people "were either lookers on or listeners."

Something, however, was done on the Tuesday — in all probability after the Prussian Minister, Count Maltzahn, told Sir John MacPherson that he had sure information an attack would be made on the Bank of England. Orders were sent for all troops and militia within thirty miles to come to London; and by forced marches about 7000 foot and Light Horse got into London in the course of Tuesday night, and early on Wednesday morning.[1]

During the day an attack had been made on North's house in Downing Street, but a party of Light Horse dispersed the mob.[2] Lord George Gordon now went to the corner of Bridge Street, and advised the crowd to disperse quietly. They took out his horses and drew him to the house of Alderman Bull. Meanwhile Justice Hyde, with some of the Guards, tried to disperse the rest. They pressed upon the Guards, who then rode among them and put them to the rout. At seven o'clock, however,

[1] On Wednesday morning a party paid a visit to Lord Mansfield's house in Caen Wood, but luckily began with regaling themselves on the Chief Justice's wine and provisions. This enabled a small detachment of military to arrive and put them to flight. There was a great difference in the courage of the rioters before the prisons were fired and after.

[2] For four nights Burke and others sat up watching the houses of Rockingham and Savile.

they had their revenge — they went to Hyde's house in Lisle Street, stripped it, and burned the furniture before his door. The Guards came up, the rioters fled; but the mischief was done.

And now the assault was made on Newgate, to set free their friends. The rioters summoned the Keeper, Akerman, and threatened to burn his house—a part of the prison—if he did not release their comrades. He refused, and hurried off to the Sheriffs. While they were debating what to do, the mob was at work. First they broke into Akerman's house—some climbed the yard-walls with ladders. They got his furniture out, piled it against the great door of the prison, and set fire to it. When Akerman returned his house was in flames. A party of 100 constables came up—the rioters let them pass till they could surround them—then they attacked them with fury, broke their staves, and made firebrands of them. The fire spread through the house to the chapel, and thence to the prison—the prisoners stood a chance of being burned alive. But the mob battered in the doors of the cells with pickaxes and sledge-hammers. The prisoners, to the number of 300, were all released—there were some who were to have been hanged next Thursday. The first use they made of their liberty was to sack the house of Sir John Fielding, in Bow Street, and commit the whole contents to the flames.

The Catholics were too terrified, too conscious of having no friends, to resist; the Protestants were either not sorry to see Popish chairs and tables burn (while they themselves got drunk on Popish liquor), or too much afraid of being taken for Papists if they tried to interfere. There was no rallying-point; when the Chief Magistrate of the City looked on as at a spectacle, and made no appeal to the well-disposed, it is not greatly to be wondered at that private citizens did not put themselves forward. Resistance which was not overpowering would only have added murder to arson—instead of only pulling down the houses and burning the goods of Catholics, the mob would have dashed out their brains.

There was no proper police in those days; and we have seen Burke's description of some of the Justices of Middlesex. During the first five days of the riots it appears that only two Magistrates appeared to read the Riot Act. Most of them simply ran away. That the Bank, the India House, and the Public Offices were not taken by the mob, and the whole City destroyed by fire, was due to the King, and to the King alone.

George the Third was a bad ruler, but he was not a coward, and it is astonishing that he ever forgave the helpless irresolution now displayed by his favourite Ministers. It ought to have destroyed his confidence in them for ever. He now resolved to act for himself. On Wednesday morning a Council was held, which Rockingham attended—he went unasked, by virtue of his right as a Privy Councillor, and "with his hair in disorder," which probably only means unpowdered. None of the Ministers seems to have known in the least what to do. The Civil Power had run away, or was at home writing letters to itself, or out in the streets watching the rioters burn the furniture and pull down the houses of peaceful citizens. The King put it to the Council whether, in so extreme an emergency, the military could not lawfully act without waiting for the Riot Act to be read? Bathurst and Sir Fletcher Norton said Yes. It is the manifest duty of a citizen to put down a riot, and a soldier is not the less a citizen because he is a soldier. Military force may only be called in when the Civil Power is too weak; but now it is not merely too weak — it is non-existent. Yet even in this awful predicament no Minister would sign such an order. Then the King had Wedderburn called in, and demanded his opinion. Wedderburn said that such assemblages as now had London in their power might be dispersed by military force without waiting for forms. The King gave the order, Wedderburn signed it, and Amherst acted upon it that same evening. And so the Bank, and London itself, was saved.[1]

"It is impossible," says the account in the *Annual Register*, "to give any adequate description of the events of Wednesday." Notice had been sent round to the remaining prisons, by the mob, of the hour at which they would come to burn them. And they came. They also sent word to Langdale & Son, the great distillers in Holborn, and several other Catholics. In the afternoon all the shops were shut, and bits of blue silk were hung out at most of the houses, and "No Popery" was chalked on the shutters. As the hot summer day drew to a close the mob began to work. At one and the same time the flames were ascending from the King's Bench, the Fleet, the New Bridewell, the toll-gates on Blackfriars' Bridge, and from

[1] Wraxall says Mansfield was present, and spoke in the same sense, but Mansfield, in his speech of June 19, says he "never heard, was present, nor consulted upon the measures adopted by his Majesty's confidential servants." But it was his opinion that any man might legally suppress a riot.

houses in every part of the town, and particularly from "the bottom and middle of Holborn—six-and-thirty fires all blazing at one time, in different quarters of the city, were seen from one spot. And all night men, women and children were running up and down with whatever they had saved in their fright as most precious."

The most awful scenes of all were in and around Holborn—the fires were "licking up everything in the way, and hastening to meet each other." Langdale's warehouses "were blazing as if the whole elements had been one continued flame." The houses next his caught fire—if there had been the least wind there must have been a second Fire of London. The liquor—much of it non-rectified spirit—ran down the kennel like a river, and the rioters lay in it wallowing, drinking the fiery stuff till many died then and there, and others lay dead drunk till they were burnt or buried in the ruin they had made. Those that were not so drunk ran about with the stuff in pails and tubs; others lay with mouths glued to the bungholes of unstaved casks. And by the light of this great conflagration the spectators could read the words "No Popery" on the blistered shutters. And now, through the roar of the furious multitude, and the crash of falling timber, came the "dreadful reports of soldiers' muskets, firing in platoons." It was the Northumberland Militia, under Lord Algernon Percy. It was never known how many were killed that night, but more died of drinking the fiery river they themselves had set flowing than fell by powder and ball.

Two attempts had been made that day on the Bank, and a third on the Pay Office, but at the first fire of the military the mob gave way. It was not so later on. When Captain Rodney, the Admiral's eldest son, arrived at the Bank with the Guards, he found Lord George Gordon, still begging fire not to burn. Gordon seems by now to have become a little afraid of the spectre he had called up, for he offered to stand at Rodney's side; but Rodney declined—he preferred not to trust him. He bade him go and try to persuade the mob to disperse. And now Colonel Holroyd arrived with the South Hants Militia, and not a moment too soon. The mobs which had wrought such havoc in Rotherhithe, Whitecross Street, Houndsditch, and other parts, were marching down Threadneedle Street, led by a man on horseback, who had been noticed as a leader in the assault on Newgate. His horse was caparisoned with trophies of the prison. Again and again he charged—for a moment it seemed as though the militia would be borne down. But there

was cannon at the Bank now; and the militia fired round after round—the man on horseback fell, and the rioters, discouraged by the loss of their leader, were driven back. It was the first repulse.

There was also fierce fighting on Blackfriars' Bridge—the mob meant to have the money at the turnstiles. They had been left unopposed so long that they did not believe the soldiers would fire—especially de Burgh's regiment, sent to St. George's Fields. Both there and on the Bridge they called to the soldiers not to fire on Protestants! It was never known how many were killed on the Bridge—both sides tried to conceal the number of the slain, and many dead rioters were thrown by their friends into the river. But all the three Bridges were held by the military before Thursday morning dawned.

The King was on foot most of the night, going between Buckingham House and the Royal Stables adjoining, which were full of Guards.

About nine o'clock that night Wraxall and three friends went out to see what was going on. They went first to Bloomsbury, where they heard Mansfield's front door burst in, and saw the rich furniture being tumbled out of window, while the soldiers looked on, waiting for orders. When they reached Holborn they found an immense multitude. There were many women—some had infants in their arms. They were only looking on—everybody seemed to be only looking on. The spilled liquor was running down the kennel, and many were drunk, but there was so little show of riot or pillage, that Wraxall and his party found it difficult to conceive who was doing the mischief, till at the windows of Langdale's house they saw figures, who, while the rooms were on fire, tore down the furniture and flung it into the street. After a long time a party of Horse Guards came, and the crowd at once began to disperse. Wraxall went on towards Fleet Market. There an astonishing spectacle met him. Langdale's other house and magazines, at the north end of the market, were ablaze, and "threw up into the air a pinnacle of flame resembling a volcano." The figures on the clock were as plain as at noonday, except when the volumes of smoke produced a temporary darkness. The mob blocked up the whole street, and began to be disorderly—but Wraxall saw the watchman, lantern in hand, going his useless round by the churchyard wall, calling the hour as though all were well—fit emblem of the Government he served. The Fleet Prison was just beginning to blaze—the sparks made it dangerous to go

near. And now they could hear the platoon firing in St. George's Fields across the river,[1] and on the Bridge—and as they approached Blackfriars, they saw the flames of King's Bench reflected in the Thames. On the bridge itself there was great carnage—but the bridge was taken and occupied, and so by this time were London and Westminster Bridges. The party could hear the heavy firing at the Bank, but could not get nearer than the Mansion House. Cheapside was empty and silent. And day was beginning to break.

Thursday the 8th of June, 1780, was a strange day. From Tyburn to Whitechapel all the shops were shut; no business was done, except a little at the Bank. The military were posted at every street and alley. The shutters of the houses still bore the legend put there for the destroying angels to see, and pass by; on the shop of a Jew in Houndsditch might be read—

THIS HOUSE A TRUE PROTESTANT.

There were 20,000 soldiers in London by now, and parties of them, "accompanied by Sir John Fielding's men," were putting down small bands of rioters, who continued to burn houses in the Borough; and arresting several persons who were attempting to rekindle the fire at Newgate. Before night there was nothing more to fear. On Friday the shops opened as usual, and business was resumed in Westminster Hall. But even that day the waters had not quite subsided—men and boys were still going about demanding money. "Pray remember the poor mob," said one urchin, and on being refused hinted that he would "go and fetch his captain." The citizen promptly remembered the mob.[2]

The Lords had met on Tuesday, and the Commons on Wednesday, but only to adjourn to the 19th—a more complete abdication of the Legislature could not have been. Late on that terrible Wednesday night—while it was still uncertain whether the Bank of England would be saved—the Lord Mayor

[1] "A great nobleman" told Wraxall he was very doubtful whether de Burgh's regiment—sent to St. George's Fields—would draw the trigger. Their Colonel said they would—and they did. Both sides tried to conceal the number of the slain, and the Bank was whitewashed next morning, to hide the bullet-marks. Wraxall thinks that about 280 were killed, or died of wounds, and that nearly as many more were wounded; the greatest slaughter being at the King's Bench, the Bank, and Blackfriars' Bridge.

[2] Some of these miserable creatures who tried to extort money after all was over were among those executed for the riots.

summoned the Common Council, and informed them that he had called them on account of the tumults—at which he had just been a looker-on. He asked their advice. The Court resolved to desire the Sheriffs to raise the *Posse Comitatus*. Also to thank the Military Association for the offer of their services, and to advise the Sheriffs to accept it, and "endeavour" to protect the Mansion House, Bank of England, or any other place in danger; and to thank the City Militia, and desire them to put themselves under the direction of the Sheriffs. We are not told whether the Lord Mayor went back again to look at the rioters.

The fact was that at last the citizens had begun to take up arms. As the account in the *Gentleman's Magazine* very honestly says: "It was not what was doing only, but what was threatened to be done, that alarmed the anxiety of many unfeeling people, who were no friends to the Catholics, and who beheld their sufferings with a malignant though secret satisfaction. When these saw the prisons opened . . . they began to fear for their own safety, and to join in wishing to see the rioters subdued."

It is impossible to resist the conclusion that there was a pretty general sympathy with the rioters until Newgate was taken. After that—when three hundred criminals had been let loose on the City from Newgate alone, and many more from the other gaols—the citizens were alarmed; but even then it was a great many hours before their alarm moved them to even a show of resistance. London continued to present the spectacle to the civilised world of furious mobs destroying property while the Lord Mayor and Aldermen looked on. Only a few scenes in the great French Revolution, and in the last days of the Commune, afford any parallel. But they, at any rate, represented the irresistible upheaval of a whole people. The riots in London represented only the ignorant brutality of a leaderless mob, inflamed by a religious fanatic who had neither the courage to avow, nor the resolution to abandon them. But as long as it was only the chapels, houses, and shops of Catholics that were destroyed, the public put up its shutters and went to look. We hardly hear of a single voice even crying Shame!—the only remonstrances which have come down to us are those of a woman here and there, entreating "the gentlemen" to carry the wreckage a little farther down the street, so as not to set her own place afire. And when the rioters demand "the books," and inspect Bibles and Common Prayers with drunken solemnity,

as often as not a neighbour steps forth to assure "the gentlemen" that, in spite of possessing these proofs of a true Protestant, the owner of the house is a "Roman Catholic." From time to time the wretched semi-madman who set them on appears, uttering feeble, half-hearted exhortations, but never speaking like a man who means to be listened to. It does not seem that there was any real leader. We do, indeed, catch sight of the "man on horseback," of a "man with a drawn sword," a "man with a rattle," a "man with a bell," a "man with a flag"—the flag never identified, but probably stolen from some small vessel lying in the Thames.

The savage ruthlessness, the dull, callous determination, the drunken zeal, the appalling skill shown in destruction, make it astonishing that these mobs did not massacre every Catholic, or reputed Catholic, or suspected friend of Catholics, whom they got hold of.

But, strange to say, though they usually threatened to throw remonstrants into the fires, they never did, and there is hardly a single case of bodily injury. On the other hand, the apathy of the lookers-on, and the miserable cowardice of the victims, gave no provocation to murder; and there was some excuse for the cowardice of the victims, for they knew that if they resisted they must expect no help from the spectators. All the evidence at the Trials agrees that the attacks on houses were made by comparatively small numbers; only in the assault on Newgate are the assailants put at as many as five hundred. Strong drink, too, played a large part in the riots. The wretched victims generally tried to propitiate these True Protestants with the strongest liquor in their own or their neighbours' cellars. At the Trials one prisoner after another pleads that he was so drunk he knows not what he did then, and remembers nothing now. When all hope of an alibi is gone, the prisoner's friends come forward to swear that he is a perfectly good fellow when sober, but a raving madman when drunk.

At the Trials, the sole question is, Was it the prisoner at the bar who did it? No single detail of destruction is ever challenged as an exaggeration. The identity of the prisoner is the only point considered. As we read the evidence, all the dreadful scene emerges in the lurid light of conflagration. We see the children flinging Lord Mansfield's books into the fire. A gentleman remarks that books can have done no harm. "What! Sir!" cries a rioter, facing round upon him, to see who is a Catholic sympathiser; and the gentleman hastily slips

away. We see the stream of miscreants bringing out Mansfield's gowns and wigs, his parchments and pictures, and pitching them into the flames; while the heavy furniture falls crashing into the area and on the pavement—where stands a file of soldiers, waiting for a J.P. to order them to interfere. We see the Westminster firemen driven off when they try to play their engine.

As prominent figures, we have "the short man in a frock like a carman's," who was the first to "burst out" the panels of the chapel in East Lane; and "the hunchback," and "the bandy-legged man," and "the man with a wooden leg," and "the black girl," and "the man on crutches," and "the man with a paralysed arm," and "the mulatto," and the "soldiers and sailors" of whom so many were concerned in the doings at the East End. And there is "the man in the raven gray suit," who haggled so long as to whether Welch of "The Ship Inn" was or was not a True Protestant, his Bible and Prayer-Book not seeming sufficient proof. At last the Inquisitor cries, "Don't blame us, your neighbours sent us"; and yelling, "No Popery!" the mob hastens on to Mrs. Curry's—she too protests it is a mistake, and is sworn on Bible and Prayer-Book. We hear Susannah Clerke screaming that Thomas Murphy of "The Sun" in Golden Lane is a rank Papist, and begging that his house may come down; whereupon the departing mob turns back, rushes in, and beginning at the wainscoting, in three or four minutes "all the front is down," and the furniture out. We see the feather-beds tumbled out of window, and cut open in the street; while men hew at the window-frames, tear down lath and plaster partitions, hack away the stairs, and swing on the great beam above a window till all comes down together. And outside the great coping-stones are being flung from the parapet, amidst cries of "Below!" And sometimes the mob is as noisy as pandemonium, and sometimes "quiet enough." We see the furniture of poor old Lebarty, the Italian, blazing on Tower Hill, and his house in Catharine Lane looking "like a ship cast away upon a rock." And the fury grows, till a man nearly loses his life for trying to save a cage of canaries at the Bridewell—when he begs that the birds may be released before the cage is thrown on the fire, and he is driven off with dreadful oaths. Yet it is certain that any equally-excited foreign mob would have shed blood.

There is the man who came into Mrs. Conolly's, at "The Two Brewers," and said, "Never fear, Mother Conolly—No

Popery!" Whereupon another man shook a rattle. Then the books are shown, and "the gentlemen" are good enough to say they find nothing in them but what is very good. But meanwhile the mob is breaking up the "boxes" in the taproom, and a lad has swept all the glasses into a common ruin with his stick—then the china off the mantelpiece goes the same way; and now other boys are at work "tearing down the front." Then there is old Premary, "a poor old man that could not speak plain English." Here they break up everything, and shake their bludgeons at old Premary, while Mrs. Premary pleads, "Pray, gentlemen, don't hurt him, and I will give you the best liquor I have, and as much as you like." It is a lath-and-plaster house, and they pull out the very grates and the copper. And at this moment it is reported that 500 or 600 of the prisoners let out of the King's Bench the night before are coming from the halfpenny hatch in Snow's Fields to join the rioters.

Then the tremendous scenes before Newgate—the pickaxes raining on the iron gates, while the flames of the Keeper's furniture leap and crackle, till in the great heat the hinges yield and the yelling mob rush in.

As to one thing, all accounts agree—that if the mob had gone earlier to the Bank and India House, "London must have been overturned that night." But by the time they began to act systematically the bridges were held by the soldiers.[1]

[1] For three months there was a camp in St. James' Park, with tents, and another in Hyde Park.

CHAPTER XCII

AFTER THE RIOTS

"On Wednesday I walked with Dr. Scot to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the Sessions-house at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. . . . There has, indeed, been an universal panick, from which the King was the first that recovered. . . . The publick has escaped a very heavy calamity. The rioters attempted the Bank on Wednesday night. . . . Jack Wilkes headed the party that drove them away. It is agreed, that if they had seized the Bank on Tuesday, at the height of the panick. . . they might have carried away irrevocably whatever they had found." —*Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.*

"Whatever some may maintain, I am satisfied that there was no combination of plan, either domestic or foreign; but that the mischief spread by a gradual contagion of frenzy, augmented by the quantities of fermented liquors, of which the deluded populace possessed themselves in the course of their depredations."—Boswell, *Life of Johnson.*

"I saw a single boy of 15 at most, in Queen-street, mounted on a penthouse, demolishing a house with great zeal, but much at his ease, and throwing the pieces to two boys still younger, who burnt them for their amusement, no one daring to obstruct them. Children are plundering at noon-day, the city of London! . . . The Bank is, by rumour, the great object of this night. I may almost assure you that no plan of defence, or, much less, of offence, is resolved on. . . .The magistrates have *all* refused to act. This night delivers us to a furious rabble, and an army who, I fear, have but little discipline." —*Richard Burke to Richard Champion*, "*In what was London*," June 1780.

THE Riots gave the North Ministry a new lease of life! That Ministry was not happy when it encountered our foreign enemies, but it has hardly been surpassed in the art of defending its own existence. The Riots brought reform and reformers into odium. Since a public meeting had had these dreadful results, all public meetings were looked at askance.[1] From insane dread of their

[1] "These riots, however, disgraceful as they were to the nation, served to prop for a time a feeble Administration, and the dread of anything like to anarchy

Catholic fellow-subjects the public passed to insane doubts of Opposition. And if Ministers did not know how to check the riots, they showed exceeding skill in sowing these suspicions and in reaping the benefit of them.

Early in July, however, the King made another attempt at "including" some of Opposition. North made an overture to Rockingham. But the King was resolved not to part with Sandwich, and even if he could be persuaded to do so, whoever came to the Admiralty in his room must not be Keppel. Nor could Fox be received—at least, not immediately—in any office which would necessitate the King's seeing him. Rockingham declined without even waiting to consult the party. He stood out for Keppel; and Fox and Richmond must be Secretaries of State—Richmond was another of the King's black sheep.

The riots were industriously represented as a preconcerted scheme to upset the Government. The wildest stories were put about of noblemen in disguise who directed the rioters. A chimney-sweep who perched himself on the roof of the market-house opposite the Fleet Prison, and at every discharge "popped up his head and assailed the soldiers with tiles, till a ball passing through the roof lodged in his heart," and "had gold in his pocket,"[1] was seriously believed by many to be "a nobleman in disguise," or if not a nobleman, "an agent at least, entrusted with his purse, to enlist conspirators and promote sedition."[2] It must be admitted that the nobleman made a bad choice of an agent.

On the other hand, Opposition said that the riots were to be made use of to introduce something like martial law, and a story went that when on the Thursday his Majesty sent a message to each of the twelve Judges, offering them military protection, Judge Gould replied "that he had grown old under the protection of English laws; that he was persuaded, however some persons might be misled, the people in general loved and respected the laws, and so great was his own attachment to them, that he would rather die under those, than live under the protection of any other."

would have driven the men of property to support any Government, and to look to a military force alone for protection."—GRAFTON, 313.

[1] "About 40 guineas, some say; 18 according to others, and two ten-pound banknotes."

[2] "He had gold in his pockets, it is true, but he had no commission, nor was he any other than a pilfering thief, who had lined his pockets in what to him was a fair way of trade."—*Gentleman's Magazine.*

Mansfield behaved with great magnanimity. When asked to furnish a statement of his loss, he declined to do so, "lest it might seem like a claim or expectation of being indemnified." He said he was warned, and offered military protection, but he had believed ordinary protection would suffice.

The contemptible kindler of the fire was not arrested till Friday, when he was "committed quietly to the Tower"—but with a stronger escort than had ever been seen for a State prisoner. The Lord Mayor was also examined before the Privy Council, and dismissed without censure,—after which he waited on his Majesty with a "loyal and dutiful address." When his term of office expired, however, he was tried before Mansfield for having "wilfully, obstinately and contemptuously neglected to do his duty" during the riots. When Mansfield had summed up, the jury found Kennet "guilty of neglect of duty only." This not satisfying the Court, they again withdrew, and after some deliberation agreed to wait on Mansfield at his house, and abide by his interpretation of the indictment. (March 10, 1781.[1])

On the 5th February, 1781, Lord George Gordon was tried in Westminster Hall for high treason, in intending to levy war on his Majesty. Erskine and Kenyon defended him. At five next morning he was acquitted, on the ground, ably urged by Erskine, that there was no malicious or traitorous intent. Almost every town and village in Scotland illuminated for his acquittal.

As the mob—in the widest meaning of that word—had been persuaded that the Protestant religion could not survive the repeal of the Penal Laws, so it was persuaded that Opposition had got up the riots. Dark hints were dropped of a design to subvert the Constitution, of persons of rank disguised among the mob, and acting as leaders, and of the revelations that the trials would make, of French gold, American emissaries, and a republican conspiracy. In particular, Lord Shelburne and the Earl of Effingham were pointed out—Shelburne, because, on June 2, before any destruction had taken place, he had been against calling out the military—and the chivalrous Effingham, who had resigned his commission rather than fight in an unjust war—suspected probably on that account. He was among the rioters on Blackfriars Bridge—was there slain, and his body thrown over the parapet into the River by his friends—but not till it had been recognised by the dress and the laced ruffles. This detail was enough for those who knew Effingham—a man who dressed with excessive plainness, and never wore ruffles! But nothing could convince True Protestants

[1] Kennet died in May, 1782.

that he was not killed on the Bridge. He had been seen at the beginning of the riots—then was seen no more. He had gone down to Yorkshire to his seat at Grange Hall, said his friends; but nobody was so simple as to believe this story—not even when they were shown paragraphs in the Yorkshire papers relating the part Lord Effingham was taking in the affairs of his County. When he returned to London, and appeared in the House of Lords next winter, it was impossible to maintain any longer that he was killed on Blackfriars Bridge. But at any rate he had been desperately wounded there, and had been all this while healing him of his wounds.

Even magistrates permitted themselves to drop hints against members of Opposition. But the trials revealed nothing. The apothecary Maskall was almost the only man above the degree of a workman who was even accused, and he proved his innocence. One other was William Pateman, hanged for pulling down Mr. Charlton's house. We are told he "appeared to be a zealot in the cause, and would have worn his cockade to the last moment, had it not been denied him. He was a young man of great expectations and some fortune, and affected to die a martyr." Such as his "fortune" may have been, he is the only rioter above the status of an apprentice. It must have been exceedingly difficult to identify men seen in such circumstances, and even when they were known, people were sometimes afraid to appear against them. With few exceptions the wretched Catholic victims seem to have been completely cowed. One girl, when asked why she did not go next day to the Justice, replied that she did go to the Constable, but he was afraid to take up the man she pointed out—"and my mother did not know there was to be any law." Considering the ferocious character of our Criminal Code—with 159 capital offences—it cannot be said that any great vindictiveness was shown, and if Burke had been listened to, there would have been less still. Wedderburn was now Lord Loughborough, and Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. Burke tried hard to influence him to "care, selection, and system" in the trials he was about to preside over; but Loughborough's charge to the Grand Jury of Surrey was most inflammatory. Then "Burke's horror of cruelty burst forth." He wrote two papers of *Reflections on the Approaching Executions*, and sent them to Thurlow, Bathurst, and Mansfield; and also to North and Grey Cooper. With deep knowledge of human nature, he wrote, "Men who see their lives respected and thought of value by others, come to respect that gift of God themselves. *To have compassion for*

oneself, or to care more or less for one's life, is a lesson to be learned, just as every other"—a fact which our ferocious code was exemplifying every day. Our 159 capital crimes only flourished the more when death was the penalty. The only effect of ferocious punishments is to make men ferocious and reckless. Because blood is in the air, men become more, not less, bloody-minded. With another flash of insight, Burke implored Judges, in passing sentence, to take into account the whole number of capital sentences, and not merely those of their own Court—otherwise they might, too late, be horror-struck at the extent of their vengeance. He thought that "six examples, in different places, on the same day, would be bloodshed enough." It appears that there were about twenty-six executions, but there were at least thrice as many sentences and reprieves, ending in commutations—exemplifying what Meredith said of the uncertainty of our terror-striking code. He also protested against punishing the rank and file most severely—the leaders were the most guilty.[1] Burke was peculiarly generous in thus pleading, for perhaps his person had been in more actual danger than any man's. Gordon deliberately pointed him out to the mob; and when he went among them and insisted on telling them his name, it was lest any other man should be taken for him. His house only escaped by being defended—it is hardly unfair to suppose that Ministers did not care to have to listen to Burke declaiming for two hours on the destruction of his property.

The inactivity of Ministers for the first five days of the riots can hardly be accounted for by any one reason. No doubt their habitual refusal to face ugly facts went for a good deal—they dealt with the riots much as they conducted the American war. Just as they were sure no other province would join Massachusetts, so they believed that the mob would stop at destroying the property of the Catholics; and though they were very far from wishing to persecute Catholics, they had nothing to hope from a class with no political rights, and very few rights of any sort. It is also quite possible that, as time went on, Ministers may have thought there was no harm in letting London see how it would be if the military were *not* called out—thus gaining over public opinion against the next meeting of supporters of Opposition. If so, they were right. Of course, they never meant things to go so far. The incredible behaviour of the Lord Mayor can only have been permitted by a Corporation in covert sympathy with the professed

[1] One hundred and fifty-nine rioters were tried, and capitally convicted. Burke thought most of the rioters were rather dissipated and unruly than very ill-disposed.

aims of the rioters. The whole story is without a parallel, whether we regard the cause or the effect. Such consequences usually grow out of some sort of provocation. Here, there was none. A Protestant Government had announced its intention to cease to persecute Catholics—that was the whole sum of the offence.

Administration had gone on doing nothing to stop the riots for five days; they acted far more promptly in stopping the Military Associations, which had given such valuable aid to the soldiers. These Associations were a kind of "Train-bands." On the 12th, Lord Amherst forbade them to carry firearms—and even demanded that they should give up their arms—the City Militia alone excepted. In the present state of things, this amounted to forbidding citizens to defend themselves, though Government failed to defend them. It was said to show an intention to establish martial law, and when Parliament returned to its duty it was the subject of an angry debate.

It is hardly credible that the first thing Parliament did on meeting after the Gordon Riots was to consider a Bill "for securing *the Protestant Religion.*" Protestants, having just set London on fire, pretended to require protection from the persons they had burnt out! It is almost more incredible that Sir George Savile brought in this Bill! It was to restrain Papists from teaching or governing Protestant children. The debate sheds a light most painful on the strength of Protestant intolerance. With unconscious irony, the supporters of the Bill talked about Papists being bound by their religion to oppose what they call heresy, that is, "to destroy those who differ from them." Alderman Bull, who said this, evidently had a glimmering of consciousness, for he added that to oppose men who held such opinions was not religious persecution, because such opinions are not religion. Popery had deluged Europe with blood, and though it was now represented as perfectly harmless, it was still the same. Then he praised the Protestant Association, talked about spurning petitions, and hinted that "the multitude lately at your doors," and the people at large, might suspect a design "to sacrifice the Protestant religion, under the specious mask of moderation and tenderness for Popery." Burke, in an indignant reply, said the petitions were those of bigotry and fanaticism—such was the inhumanity of these fanatics, that after the school in the city had been destroyed, a petition had been presented that the poor man who owned it should not have a lease of the land again to rebuild it. He attacked the petitioners—showed how many could only make their mark—quoted the names of several women. "These monsters," he said, "not being able to read and write

themselves, are desirous of preventing others from receiving education." He spoke of Payne the Constable, who went about trying to get priests imprisoned for life, only for "saying their prayers in a language he did not understand, but they did." He instanced Mr. Malony, "an honest and inoffensive man"—the humanity of the Crown had released him (after a year and a half's imprisonment). Payne also tried to imprison Mr. Talbot, brother to the Earl of Shrewsbury, but failed in proof. On the Second Reading, Burke's indignation rising as he saw that the awful lesson of the riots had not shamed Protestant bigotry, he exposed the lie that Catholics bought poor children; it originated in Ireland, where the thing was actually done—*but by Protestant charter schools*, supported by yearly grants from Parliament! They bought the children of Papists, and sent them from north to south, from east to west, changing their names, and breaking the ties of relationship. No one seems to have made the smallest attempt to refute this charge. After Mawbey's speech—defending the assembly of the 2nd of June, comparing it to a County Meeting, and insinuating that many of the most active rioters were Catholics—"not that he would therefore insinuate reflections against Papists in general: it was no reflection on any profession, that highwaymen, footpads, or housebreakers" belonged to it—Fox's comes like a wholesome wind sweeping down a stifling valley. He was for universal toleration—he too had observed the signatures to the Petition, and thought it curious that so many who could not write their names should have their blood fired that a Roman Catholic should read or write. And as for Catholicism being incompatible with democracy, where did democracy flourish more than in the Catholic cantons of Switzerland?

At last Burke refused to "attend" the Bill any longer, and walked out. It passed on the 28th.

In the Lords, the Bishops professed to love tolerance, and no doubt believed they did, but they did not wish to allow a Papist to teach a day school. They were, however, more honest than most of the Protestant party in the Commons, for they frankly confessed that Catholics' schools had not really increased, and that Protestant children were not taught in them. Thurlow moved an amendment.[1] He could not go as far as Mr. Locke in toleration,

[1] "That Roman Catholics be permitted to teach anything, in any manner they think proper, only that they be not suffered to keep boarding schools, or any such seminary as may give them the exclusive government of the children under their direction."

On the second reading of this disgraceful Bill, its supporters stated that since

but he reminded their lordships that after all Catholics were Englishmen, and had conducted themselves as such. Nothing had been proved against them. If they ever deserved exemption from improper penalties, they deserved it now. As the Bill stood they were liable to penalties for teaching anything—music, Italian, etc., "which cannot be learnt so well without them." "Is this liberal? Is this tolerant?" His amendment was carried unanimously. Next day the Archbishop of Canterbury retracted his vote—he could not agree to Papists teaching day schools. But on a motion for postponement, the Bill was lost, and the country was saved the shame of passing a new Bill of pains and penalties as the expression of its opinion of the Gordon Riots.[1]

Of this shocking and shameful story it is difficult to speak with calmness. We have a legend that the English nation abhors fanaticism—which may be defined as the acceptance of any one fact in disregard of other facts, or of any one truth in disregard of other truths. But on this occasion the nation seems to have gone so far in this direction that it appeared almost more eager to prevent the children of the very poor from being taught the dangerous doctrine of non-resistance to authority (a great point was made of this by Mawbey and the most fanatical of the "Protestants"), than they were to prevent the Bank of England from being sacked and their own houses burnt over their heads.

The most astonishing part of all is, that the Protestant religion is founded on a Protest against the claim of a certain Person, or set of persons, to dictate to us in matters of religious doctrine. The Right of Private Judgment is the corner-stone of the Protestant form of religion. The moment we begin to persecute—no matter on what specious pretext—we cut away the ground from under our own feet, and reduce the great quarrel to an ignoble squabble as to who is most in the right on questions which, the more

the last two years—that is, since the relaxation of the Penal Laws—new Catholic schools had been opened—thirty-three in or near London, besides many new chapels and "mass-houses" in different parts of the kingdom. Lord Beauchamp and Mr. Burke told the House that enquiries had been made, and there was not a single Protestant boy at any of these schools, and only one girl. Burke showed that some of the schools were long-established, some were several little schools consolidated.

[1] "The idea of reviving departed penalties on Roman Catholics, to reward the rebellion and other atrocious crimes of their adversaries, I hold to be unnatural, and when it comes to be tried, will be found impracticable."—*Burke to Lord Chief Justice Loughborough*, June 15, 1780.

true they are, must be the more difficult of adequate comprehension by any finite mind. Intolerance is an infinitely greater sin in a Protestant than in a Catholic, because we found our own secession on the right to differ. When we plead—and some of us are not ashamed to plead it still—that we were not persecuting Papists for their religion, because theirs is not a religion, we only add hypocrisy to intolerance. The same could be said of any sect by any sect. All the excuses urged for Protestant intolerance are as valid for Philip II and Louis XIV as for the Protestant Associators of 1780. There never was a persecutor who did not justify himself by saying he was not persecuting, but was doing something else. One of the worst features of Protestant persecutors is their complaint of Popish bigotry. Papists may be persecuted because they are so bigoted, because if we do not persecute them they will persecute us. What is this but "Necessity the tyrant's plea"? Every tyrant, like every persecutor, pleads that he is but protecting himself from destruction.

We cannot bear to hear it, but there have been as many and as shocking Protestant persecutions as Catholic. The story of the Penal Laws against Irish Catholics is as hideous as anything told of Spanish Inquisitors. In every case political motives have mingled with and made use of pure fanaticism; in every case, the sacred name of Religion has been profaned; in every case human malignity, greed, and lust of dominion have crucified Christ afresh, and put Him to an open shame.

Before Ministers had realised how much their position was improved, an attempt was made at Coalition, and at eleven one morning, a few days after the riots, North met Fox behind the scenes at the Opera House in the Haymarket. North was accompanied by Brummel (father of the Beau), and Fox by Sheridan, director of the Opera House. On the 3rd of July serious overtures were made to Rockingham—Frederick Montagu being the intermediary. He was to intimate to the Marquess that the King would receive Portland, Manchester, Burke, Fox, and Townshend. But Fox must have some office which did not bring him into the Closet; and Richmond was to be excluded. Nor would the King part with Sandwich. The questions put to Rockingham were: Would he insist on granting independence rather than continue the war? Was the substitution of Keppel for Sandwich at the Admiralty essential? Must the Contractors'

Bill be agreed to? And any part of Burke's Bill, and what part? And must Rockingham have the Treasury, or could North remain?

As was to be expected, these conditions were impossible. The negotiations fell through—but eighteen months later the King was compelled to accept every one of the points in dispute.

In the midst of the debates on the foolish and mischievous Bill for "securing" the Protestant Religion, Burke's Establishment Bill received the final *coup de grâce*. On the 23rd of June all the remaining clauses were rejected, North moved the previous question, and the Committee was dissolved. After which happy consummation the House returned to consider how to prevent Catholic schoolmasters from teaching poor Protestant children to read and write.

The next news from America arrived on July 21st. It was very bad—the French and Spanish fleets had joined on June 12, and were off Dominica; and the Governor of Jamaica's great plan for an expedition against the Spaniards on the Black River was rendered impossible. Attack must be turned into defence, and Jamaica itself was in danger. Rodney had fought de Guichen thrice, without decisive result; Cornwallis had retired to Charlestown, and the Provincials were enlisting with Gates; Washington was watching for an opportunity to attack New York, and the Quebec fleet had been intercepted by the American privateers on the Banks of Newfoundland, and 22 vessels had been taken. Worse than all, Don Luis de Cordova had caught the convoy for the East and West Indies—many merchantmen, 18 victuallers and transports, and 5 East Indiamen—51 ships taken at one fell swoop off Cape St. Vincent, and 8 or 9 more picked up afterwards!

"Such a prize had never entered the harbour of Cadiz." There were nearly 60 ships in all, and so many prisoners, of such different sorts, that they "resembled more the inhabitants of a sacked city, than the ordinary crews of a fleet"; 1520 seamen, with their officers; 1255 soldiers—partly Royal, partly Company troops; 74 land officers; 149 women; 137 passengers of both sexes—2865 persons in all. The value of the captures was great, but greater still was the loss of all these stores to Government and the Company, for they would take time to replace. There were 50 complete sets of sails, a vast quantity of cordage, clothes for twelve regiments, 200 pieces of "fine brass cannon," and £300,000 in money.

Parliament was prorogued July 8th, and so ended one of the worst Parliaments which ever betrayed the interests of a country. It never sat again. Good news came of the reduction of Carolina; and Ministers, finding themselves grown almost popular, resolved not to wait till next year for the General Election. They dissolved unexpectedly on the 1st of September.

CHAPTER XCIII

THE SOUTH

"South Carolina, with a northern army to assist her, could not or would not even preserve her own capital. When news reached Connecticut, that Gage had sent a force into the country, and that blood had been shed, Putnam was at work in his field; leaving his plough in the furrow, he started for Cambridge, without changing his garments. When Stark heard the same tidings, he was sawing pine-logs, and without a coat; shutting down the gate of his mill, he commenced his journey to Boston in his shirt-sleeves. The same spirit animated the Whigs far and near, and the capital of New England was invested with 15,000 armed men. How was it at Charlestown? That city was the great mart of the South, and, what Boston still is, the centre of the export and import trade of a large population. In grandeur, in splendour of buildings, in decorations, in equipages, in shipping, and in commerce, Charlestown was equal to any city in America. But its citizens did not rally to save it, and General Lincoln was compelled to accept terms of capitulation. He was much censured for the act. Yet whoever calmly examines the circumstances, will be satisfied, I think, that the measure was unavoidable; and that the inhabitants, as a body, preferred to return to their allegiance to the British Crown. The people on whom Congress and General Lincoln depended to complete his force, refused to enlist under the Whig banner; but after the surrender of the city, they flocked to the royal standard by hundreds . . . so general was the defection, that persons who had enjoyed Lincoln's confidence, joined—so did men who had been in his councils. Sir Henry Clinton told the Ministry that the whole State had submitted, and again become a part of the empire. To the women of South Carolina, and to Marion, Sumpter, and Pickens, it was owing that Clinton's declaration did not prove entirely true for a time."—Sabine, *The American Loyalists.*

A SOUTHERN Expedition had long seemed to hold out the brightest hopes. The wealthy Province of South Carolina would be a rich prize to her conquerors, and a corresponding loss to the rebels. The loss of South Carolina meant the loss of Georgia — perhaps of all the South. In all the plans put forward—and they are many—for the "reduction of America," the reduction of the Carolinas has a prominent place. If the South could be ravaged, and the tobacco of Virginia destroyed, the chief financial resources of the rebels would be cut off.

It was also supposed that the rebellion had not taken a firm hold of the South. Those who believed that America had been led away by a few designing men, and that the vast majority were only longing to be reconciled, had always complained that the British Generals in America never used the means ready to their hand of subduing one part of America—or rather, one party in America—by the other. The loyalists are really in a majority—only organise them in every province, and the thing is done. This had been tried to a small extent in Jersey, and to a less extent in Pennsylvania; but it was a chief indictment against Sir William Howe that he had done it partially, half-heartedly—almost as though he did not wish it to succeed, and certainly in a manner sure to fail. A great part of the evidence of General Robertson, and all that of Galloway, at the Enquiry, was intended to prove this. It was upon this that Ministers relied to excuse the failure of their measures. Cornwallis was now to try it under far more favourable conditions — for before he began, he was able to write to Germaine that there were few men in South Carolina who were not prisoners to the British, or in arms on their side. Never, therefore, was there a better opportunity of conquering disloyal America by loyal.

At this time East and West Florida were new settlements. In West Florida there was a new British colony, in the district once the country of the Natches — an Indian tribe which the French had exterminated. In the spring of 1779 a Captain Willing led a party of Americans into these settlements—he seems to have come down the Mississippi—and the inhabitants, unable to resist, accepted the new government. It would be a great thing if all this district could be recovered, and held with Georgia. Its products—especially rice, its staple —were now enjoyed by the enemy, French and American. It would be highly convenient if they could be transferred to the use of the British armies. American commerce, since the war began, meant little besides the commerce of the South of Georgia, the Carolinas, and the Floridas. Another strong reason for a Southern campaign was the supposed strength of the loyalists there. For all these considerations, joined to the unsatisfactory results of the war in the north and centre of America, Clinton had sent Colonel Campbell, in November, 1778, with the 71st Foot, two battalions of Hessians, and four of Provincials, to Georgia, escorted by a small squadron under Sir Hyde Parker. General Prevost, who commanded the

troops in East Florida, was ordered to take all the force he could spare from the Fort of Augustine and invade Georgia.

The Americans were totally unprepared. Campbell took Savannah, with the loss of only four men,[1] on December 29th, 1778, six days after he arrived before it. The victor displayed the greatest humanity and moderation; yet if there was an officer in the British army who might have been excused for severity to Americans, Colonel Archibald Campbell was that officer. He had been their prisoner, and had been shamefully and unjustly used. On a false report that General Lee was closely confined, Campbell was thrown into the common gaol, and suffered the miseries of which so many American prisoners complained in New York. It required several letters from Washington, asserting that the report as to Lee was false, before Campbell was released from this horrible place. Yet to Campbell's eternal honour, far from visiting his sufferings on the enemy, he distinguished himself at Savannah as much by humanity as by valour and conduct, so that it could be said with truth, that "no place in similar circumstances ever suffered so little by depredation, as the town of Savannah did upon this occasion; even taking into the account that committed by their own negroes during the darkness of the approaching night." A fact which the writer in the *Annual Register* cites as evidence that "those enormities, so frequently attributed to the licence of the soldiers, should with much more justice be charged to the indefensible conduct of their superiors." Officers can check plunder and outrage, if they are determined to do so.

In ten days after the fall of Savannah, Campbell had all but cleared Georgia of rebels—only a small body held out at Sunbury Fort. He was just setting out to reduce them, when General Prevost sent him word that he had taken the Fort, and was marching on Savannah.

The loyalists in the back parts of North Carolina were greatly encouraged by these British successes. At the beginning of the troubles they had been almost cut to pieces under their leader Macdonald. Many of them were little more than outlaws, some had taken up with the Indians. Their operations were confined to small predatory raids on the frontiers. They were animated by a peculiar hatred to their Whig neighbours. About 700 of them now assembled, encouraged by Prevost's arrival; but before they could do anything they were defeated and dispersed

[1] The Americans lost about 100 killed—including many lost in the swamp in escaping, and about 500 prisoners.

by the nearest militia; about half of them were killed or taken, and about 300 of the remainder found their way to Prevost, and joined the royal forces. So that even in North Carolina the Tories were totally unable to cope with the popular party —showing the utter falsity of the assertions of Robertson and Galloway.

South Carolina was now the great object. General Lincoln had arrived with a reinforcement to protect the Province. He posted himself on the north side of the Savannah River, about twenty miles above the town; a force of 2000 at Briar Creek, on the south side, was to hold the Tories in check. Here, on March 3, Lieut.-Colonel Prevost surprised them in open day, and totally defeated them, with a great loss in officers, many of whom perished in trying to cross the deep and rapid river, or in the deep morass which covered the American left. Again the Province was cleared of rebels. The two small armies remained encamped on opposite sides of the Savannah, neither venturing to pass the other, till the end of April. Then Lincoln marched his force up country to the Fort of Augusta, where a meeting of delegates was to assemble. The winter floods were still out —the river, always very difficult, was considered impassable "in times of freshes," and in the face of an army. Lincoln left General Moultrie and 1500 men to guard the passes.

Prevost now determined to enter Carolina. He passed the river at different points, with about 3000 men. Moultrie's militia were seized with panic on seeing the British come out of the swamps—they fled before Prevost to Charlestown. Lincoln, believing this only a foraging party, would not return. Prevost thought he might take Charlestown then and there, if he pushed on—the loyalists assured him the town would capitulate. At last Lincoln was convinced he ought to return, but Prevost was then some days ahead of him, and had taken post on the Neck. It was, however, by no means as the loyalists had said—Prevost found "numerous artillery" mounted on the ramparts, and shipping and galleys covering the American lines. His numbers were small, and he had neither "battering artillery" nor a naval force to co-operate with him (Parker was at Savannah). He saw that an assault must not be risked. He tried to negotiate. The town offered to capitulate on condition that the Province was to be neutral during the war. Prevost would not grant this, and the town would not accept his own "generous offers." If he delayed till Lincoln came, he was lost; so he retired that same night, and by morning was once more on the south side of

Ashley River—while Charlestown, not knowing he had gone, was bracing herself for his attack. On two small islands,[1] Prevost waited for the reinforcements and supplies that were coming by sea. The first ships were taken by privateers, but at last the *Perseus* and the *Rose* got to him with supplies.

The "sickly season" was beginning, and Prevost was preparing to move to the more healthy situation of Port Royal Island (a better harbour for shipping, and near the town of Savannah), when Lincoln suddenly attacked him with his whole force. Prevost repulsed the attack, but he had sent his horses forward and could not pursue, and the enemy got off, taking their killed and wounded with them. Soon after Prevost moved to Port Royal.

There, on September 4, he heard that five French men-of-war had been seen off Savannah Bar. They were the van of d'Estaing's fleet. On the 8th, 42 sail were reported—mostly men-of-war. On the 9th, there were 54 vessels outside the Bar, and Prevost called in his outposts, and made ready to be attacked. The four small British vessels retired towards the town. Four large frigates came over the Bar. All the outposts in Georgia had come in, except Lieut.-Colonel Cruger, with the garrison of Sunbury—but he could not cross the river, and in a few days was obliged to capitulate for want of provisions. Prevost threw up redoubts, landed cannon from the ships, and prepared to defend the town. They heard that Lincoln was approaching with about 1500 men, and more on their way from all parts of Carolina. Pulaski, "joined by the horse from above," advanced to within eight miles of the town. On the 16th, d'Estaing summoned the town to *surrender to the arms of France.* For form's sake Prevost consulted his officers. They agreed to ask for a truce to deliberate. By noon next day all the men Prevost expected had arrived—some with great difficulty, as the enemy held the ship channel. Prevost replied to d'Estaing that they would defend themselves to the last man.

Most gallantly did they keep their word. They strengthened their defences, erected batteries, sunk ships in the channel, threw a boom across, above the town, and sometimes scoured Yamacraw swamp. On the 22nd the enemy appeared in force all along their front. On the 24th, when the morning fog cleared off, the garrison discovered that the enemy had pushed a sap to within 300 yards of their works. Major Graham, with three

[1] St. James and St. John. Prevost's post on the mainland was at Stono Ferry.

companies of light infantry, was sent out to reconnoitre. Prevost says he would have also sent the New York Volunteers, but was afraid their ardour might carry them too far—he did not wish for a general action. Graham, with the infantry, dashed "with amazing rapidity" into the enemy's nearest work, and held it till "two solid columns" had nearly gained his flanks, and till the whole French camp was in motion. He then retired as rapidly, and the columns sustained considerable loss from our artillery fire. The works went on, with occasional fighting, till the 2nd of October, when the French began to bombard the town. At daybreak on the 4th, they opened with 9 mortars, and 37 cannon from the land and 16 from the water, but only killed "a few helpless women and children, and some negroes and horses, in the town and on the common." The Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of Georgia now came into camp, and remained during the siege. On the 6th a wooden house took fire, and Prevost sent to ask d'Estaing for permission to send the women and children out of town on board of ships, and down the river, under the protection of a French man-of-war. After three hours Lincoln and d'Estaing refused, on the ground that the time allowed for deliberation, on September 16, had been used to receive succour. "Latent reasons may again exist."

A little before daylight on the 9th, the enemy attacked the British lines. It was still dark, and there was a very thick fog, which made it impossible to tell whence the attack came. The troops waited coolly at their posts. The chief attack, led by d'Estaing in person, "with the flower of the French and rebel armies," and all the principal officers of both, was made on the British right. Under cover of a swampy hollow they advanced in three columns, but lost their way a little in the bog. Still, "the attack was very spirited," and, for a time, obstinate. Two stand of colours were actually planted on the parapet; but the resistance was so determined, and the fire of the seamen's batteries and field-pieces so severe, that they were "thrown into some disorder—at least at a stand." At this most critical moment, Major Glasier, of the 60th Grenadiers, advanced rapidly from the lines with the marines, and charged, "it may be said, with a degree of fury." In an instant the ditches were cleared, the Grenadiers charging headlong into them, and driving the enemy in confusion into the swamp. Another column, to the left, was repulsed in every attempt to get out of the hollow. It was now light, but the fog was still thick, and Prevost dared

not take full advantage of the enemy's confusion. The attack was repulsed with heavy loss—the French owning to 700 killed and wounded. D'Estaing himself was twice wounded, and Pulaski was killed. The British loss was exceedingly small. At 10 o'clock there was a truce to bury the dead, the British handing over the enemy's wounded within their lines.

From now to the 8th of October nothing particular happened. The French were now very civil, and made many apologies for having refused to let the women and children go away—a French officer laying the blame on "the scoundrel Lincoln, and the Americans." An offer was made for Mrs. Prevost and her children and company to be received on board the *Chimère*, but Prevost replied that what had once been somewhat uncivilly refused was not worth acceptance. By this time the garrison knew that the French were preparing to raise the siege, and on the 18th, "the fog clearing off about nine o'clock," they found they had moved off. Patrols were sent in all directions, but as all bridges were broken nothing could be done. An exchange of prisoners took place. The French embarked, and sailed for France. The rebels went "God knows where"—supposed to be by way of Zubley's Ferry. Prevost wrote home the warmest praises of his little army, whether British, Hessian, Provincials, or Militia, and especially of his engineer, Captain Moncrief.[1]

It is curious to observe how all the actors in this great struggle supposed it must be finally fought out at New York. As soon as one plan for its recovery failed, another was formed by the Americans; while all the fears of the British commanders, on hearing of a rebel success, were lest now Washington should make another attempt on New York. But New York's part in the war was played. The last scenes of the great drama were to be in the South. It was now to be the turn of South Carolina. Clinton intended to undertake the expedition himself. As Tarleton observes in his History, "The richness of the country, its vicinity to Georgia, *and its distance from General Washington*, pointed out the advantages and facility of its conquest."

Washington was unable to disappoint Colonel Tarleton by going South himself—he was compelled to remain and guard the Hudson—but he sent most of his southern troops.

Clinton sailed with Admiral Arbuthnot and Lord Cornwallis on December 26, 1779. The voyage was very tempestuous. An ordnance ship went down with all her stores. Clinton lost all his horses, and several transports—the crews being saved. From

[1] Prevost's despatch is dated November 1 (1779).

Tybee, he went to James and John Islands,[1] and found that his long voyage had given the rebels time to fortify Charlestown on the land side. It was not till the 29th of March, 1780, that he landed on Charlestown Neck, and Arbuthnot passed the bar. By the 3rd of April his guns were mounted in battery, and the Admiral sailed into harbour, under a very heavy fire from about 3000 Americans on Sullivan's Island. Clinton summoned the town, offering the inhabitants their lives and property, and threatening the consequences if they drove him to storm. Lincoln refused to surrender. The American ships in harbour seemed disposed at first to dispute the passage up the river, but suddenly retired to Charlestown. They had discovered that the depth of water in harbour had been over-estimated, so they could not get near enough to protect the entrance! The discovery was a great blow—they had placed their chief reliance on being able to keep the river blocked and the harbour free.

Clinton pushed on his works, and had finished his second parallel on the 19th of April. He was now within 450 yards of the town. As the presence of the fleet relieved him from anxiety about his communications, he was able to detach Colonel Webster and 1400 men, to break up the forces of the enemy within the country. Tarleton now made the first of his many brilliant strokes, by cutting off the cavalry and militia, and taking Biggin's Bridge over Cooper's River — this gave Webster the command of the country, with a great supply of provisions, and enabled him to stop all land-communication with the town. Charlestown was now invested by sea and land. On the 18th a considerable reinforcement had reached Clinton from New York. He sent part of it, under Cornwallis, to Cooper's River; and on the 6th of May he completed his third parallel. The same day Admiral Arbuthnot landed a party of seamen and marines on Sullivan's Island, and threatened to batter the fort; on which the garrison surrendered to terms.

Cornwallis was clearing the country. At Santee, Tarleton overtook a body of horse which the Provincials had collected with great difficulty. He charged and broke them — most of them fled to the morasses, where many perished miserably. Every horse of the corps fell into Tarleton's hands. Clinton now again offered terms. They were again refused, and the batteries of the third parallel were opened. Under this fire

[1] James Island stretches to the south of Charlestown harbour. Charlestown lies between Ashley and Cooper's Rivers.

Clinton carried the works on the Neck as far as the ditch. On the 11th Lincoln sent word that he would accept the terms offered two days before. Clinton agreed — not without a consciousness of his own generosity. On the 12th the British took possession of Charlestown, with "7 general officers, a commodore, 10 continental regiments, and 3 battalions of artillery,—with French, seamen, and militia, 5618 men in arms; with the Provincial Deputy-Governor, the Council, all the civil officers, and 1000 sailors." It was the surrender of an army, and might well be set against the catastrophe at Saratoga. The garrison were allowed some of the honours of war, but were not to uncase their colours. The troops were to keep their baggage, and remain prisoners of war till exchanged. The militia might go home on parole, and were not to be molested. All citizens to be considered prisoners on parole. Officers retained their swords and pistols; their baggage was not searched, and they were allowed to sell their horses in the town. As there had been no sorties or assaults, the loss of life was not large, but the disaster was incalculable.

The spoils of Charlestown—about £300,000 sterling—were distributed among the British and Hessians. A Major-General's share was more than 4000 guineas.

No time was lost in following up the success at Charlestown. Cornwallis was sent to march up the north bank of the Santee, while another corps marched up the south bank, towards Ninety-Six.[1] Cornwallis was marching against Colonel Buford, who was retreating on North Carolina, with artillery and stores. Buford had arrived too late to relieve Charlestown. He had with him 380 of the Virginia line — the troops for which Charlestown had waited so eagerly—and had been joined by Colonel William Washington,[2] with a few of the cavalry who had survived the surprise of Monk's Corner.[3] As Buford was making forced marches, Cornwallis detached Tarleton with about 300 men and a 3-pounder. It was sultry weather. After a day and a night Tarleton reached Rugeley's Mills, at dawn on the 29th of May, and learned that Buford was twenty

[1] A name given to the Fort in early times, because it was ninety-six miles from the chief town of the Cherokees. It was in a fertile and healthy region, between the Savannah and Saluda Rivers. Cornwallis should have said, "the north-east, and south-west" banks of the Santee.

[2] Colonel William Washington was a cousin of General Washington.

[3] On the 13th of April, Tarleton and Ferguson surprised a force of militia at Monk's Corner, thirty miles above Charlestown. This and several similar affairs were undertaken during the siege, to cut off supplies for Charlestown.

miles ahead. Tarleton pressed on, while his men, and the horses of the 3-pounder, dropped from exhaustion. He had heard that Buford was trying to join another rebel force, and hoping at least to detain him, he sent on a captain with a summons. The Captain overtook Buford on the banks of the Waxhaw, a stream on the border of North Carolina. Buford read the summons without halting his men, and wrote a brief refusal—he would defend himself to the last extremity. Tarleton came up with him about three in the afternoon—he had marched 105 miles in 54 hours. The action began in a wood—Tarleton attacked both flanks and the centre at once, "and at the same instant, all were equally victorious." Tarleton excuses the butchery that followed by saying it began when he was unhorsed—his cavalry thought he was slain, and took a terrible revenge. Though the Americans begged for quarter, 113 were slain on the spot, and of the rest only 50 could be carried off—many were too much mangled to be moved. Buford himself escaped.

After this, resistance seemed at an end. In his last letter from Charlestown (June 4) Clinton tells Germaine that the inhabitants are repairing to his army, declaring their allegiance to the King, and offering their services. Often they brought in as prisoners "their former oppressors or leaders; and I may venture to assert, that there are few men in South Carolina who are not either our prisoners, or in arms with us." He sailed next day for New York, convinced that the conquest of the South was complete.

CHAPTER XCIV

CAMDEN

"This action [at Hanging Rock] was too brilliant to need any comment of mine, and will, I have no doubt, highly recommend Lieut.-Col. Tarleton to his Majesty's favour. The rebel forces being at present dispersed, the internal commotions and insurrections will now subside. But I shall give directions to inflict exemplary punishment on some of the most guilty, in hopes to deter others, in future, from sporting with allegiance, and oaths, and with the lenity and generosity of the British Government."—*Cornwallis' Despatch, with the account of Camden, and of Tarleton's surprise of Sumpter*, Aug. 21, 1780.

NORTH CAROLINA'S institutions had been monarchical from the first, though political or social disorder seems to have prevailed to some extent. Many adherents of James II took refuge there after 1688. There were also many Scots refugees of a still earlier time. Whigs and Tories were therefore arrayed of old in more or less separate camps. The Tories began the final struggle—they were so strong in Cumberland County that they ravaged the estates of the Whigs with impunity, and carried off their slaves and cattle, long before a British regular set foot there.

South Carolina was for half a century a proprietary Government, like Pennsylvania. In 1719 the people abolished this form, and established a temporary republic, but two years afterwards a royal Government was established, which had continued till now. The population of South Carolina was a mongrel one, made up of emigrants from Switzerland, Germany, France, Ireland, and the Northern Colonies. Yet she was the first to form an independent constitution, and she over-paid her assessed contribution to the war by 1,205,978 dollars.

There was not the same antagonism of interests in the South as in the North—our twenty-nine trade-laws were chiefly intended to keep down manufacture. We pressed much harder, therefore, on New England, which was naturally fitted for manufacture, than on the South, whose riches lay in raw

material. We had so contrived the "regulation" of commerce, as it was euphemiously called—it really meant the prevention—as to make every merchant in New England feel he had a grievance against the British Custom-house officer. It was not so in the South—or, at least, it was so in a much softened degree. At the same time the South was, compared with New England, an unsettled country, still retaining many features of a new colony—especially in that it was thinly populated for its extent.

Cornwallis was now in a separate command—that last ambition of an aspiring officer. South Carolina was reduced, but there remained North Carolina—a province singularly full of loyalists. Nothing, however, could be done there till the harvest was got in, as till then troops could not subsist. He therefore impressed on the friends of Government in North Carolina to keep quiet for a while, and do nothing to excite suspicion, before he was ready to move. Unfortunately they were impatient—one Colonel Moore rose on the 18th of June, so incautiously that the rebel General Rutherford defeated him with loss. When Cornwallis wrote this to Clinton, however, he still thought the notable scheme of conquering one part of America by another was just about to be carried out. He would soon have a local army as large as his own.

This was on June 30. By July 14, when he next wrote, the whole face of affairs in the two Carolinas had changed. General de Kalb was at Hillsborough with 2000 troops; there were several other forces in different districts—Caswell's and Sumpter's among others. And "many" of the disaffected Carolinians, whom Lord Rawdon had put on parole, had joined Sumpter. Two thousand five hundred Virginian Militia had followed de Kalb,—in fact, another rebel army had suddenly sprung up. The rebel Provincial Government was making great efforts to raise troops, and was cruelly persecuting loyalists. Lord Rawdon was at Camden, just within the border of North Carolina, on the great Santee River, and Cornwallis was making that place his depôt, and, in spite of the excessive heat, was sending forward from Charlestown all the provisions and military stores he could spare. Skirmishes were taking place. It was becoming evident that the submission of Carolina had been only compulsory. As de Kalb's army grew, Cornwallis' reclaimed rebels deserted him—whole bodies of them at a time. A Colonel Lisle, who was on his parole, and had a certificate of good conduct, carried off a whole battalion of militia raised for Cornwallis by another gentleman, and took them to Sumpter. Another battalion, appointed to convoy the sick of

the 71st Regiment down the Pedee to Georgetown, seized their officers, and carried off everybody to the rebels. Soon Rawdon had to draw in his posts, the rebels had become so dangerous.

For a hundred miles back from the sea South Carolina is a level country, full of swamps—some of them only canebrakes, others rich rice-fields. There are forests of cypress and cedar, so tangled with the wild vine as to be almost impenetrable; but with great open savannahs in them, where the land is fertile and the pasture good. A stranger would be lost in these swamps—might even be engulfed in the most treacherous of them. Here, on the banks of the great Santee River, Sumpter had his camp. He was an old soldier of the French War—was with Braddock. They called him the Gamecock. In one of the many raids which were supposed to be subduing Carolina, his house had been burned down, and his wife and children driven out into the swamp. He was soon in command of a band—very insufficiently armed at first, but better supplied after a little victory over a body of British Tories. Before long he was 600 strong, and the terror of the frontier.

North Carolina had been hitherto regarded chiefly as the way to Virginia. The tobacco of Virginia was to pay off the French loan—to destroy it seemed the obvious means of bringing about the financial ruin of the rebellion. Cornwallis had therefore resolved to attempt the conquest of North Carolina.

He had been too hasty in believing that North Carolina was loyal. There was "a hardy Presbyterian stock" in the heart of the Province—Scotsmen who migrated first to the North of Ireland, and thence to America—a stubborn set, said to be as impulsive as Irishmen and as dogged as Covenanters. "They always behaved insolently to their governors," said Governor Barrington in 1731. They had even driven out some of them. And when the frontiers of Virginia were adjusted in 1727, the borderers were eager to be included in North Carolina, because "there they paid no tribute to God or Cæsar." The "Regulators" of North Carolina[1] were the occasion of the first blood drawn in resisting arbitrary government in America. A year before the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia, Mecklenburgh in North Carolina had declared itself independent of Great Britain.

On the 25th of July, General Gates reached de Kalb's camp on the Pedee, and took over the command. He was no doubt a little too full of his victory at Saratoga, and his Proclamation of

[1] "The regulators—the earliest revolutionaries—did not as a rule become Whigs—most of them joined the King's side, and enlisted!"—SABINE.

August 4th begins rather vain-gloriously—as though he had already conquered here too. De Kalb had been waiting for provisions—Gates resolved not to wait, the provisions could overtake the army. In vain de Kalb represented that the troops had not one day's rations in advance. In vain Colonel Williams, de Kalb's Adjutant-General, warned Gates that the country between him and Camden was all pine-barrens, sand-hills, and swamps. Gates set off on the second day after his arrival, and insisted on marching by the direct route, over Buffalo Ford—the most sterile route of all. He was in a hurry to form a junction with Caswell and the North Carolina Militia, and fall upon Rawdon at Camden. The supplies never overtook him; his men ate the lean cattle in the woods, and the unripe corn and peaches, and many of them got dysentery. But by the 13th of August he was at Rugeley's Mills, twelve miles from Camden, and Caswell was with him. He had now in all 3052 men fit for duty; and next day Stevens joined him with 700 Virginia Militia.

Rawdon, whose information at this time was very complete, had sent word to Cornwallis that Gates was marching against him; and on the evening of the 10th Cornwallis set out from Charlestown. He reached Camden a few hours before Gates arrived at Rugeley's. The British force was also much reduced by sickness—Cornwallis' whole force was rather more than 2000, but only about 1400 were fit for duty. Besides these, he had four or five hundred militia and refugees.

On the 5th of August, Sumpter had almost annihilated the Prince of Wales' regiment at Hanging Rock, and had dispersed a large body of North Carolina loyalists under Colonel Brian. On the 14th Gates heard from Sumpter that he was trying to cut the communications between Cornwallis and Charlestown. Gates did not know that Cornwallis was already at Camden! The same evening Gates moved on to a deep stream about seven miles from Camden, intending to surprise Rawdon.

Camden was so bad a position for a battle, that Cornwallis would have retreated on Charlestown, but for having to leave his stores and his 800 sick. He, too, resolved to try a surprise. Thus it happened that at half-past two in the night the advanced guards of both the little armies stumbled on each other in the dark. There was a skirmish, and a few prisoners were taken, and Gates learned that Cornwallis was before him with 3000 men. He called a Council of War, and asked what was best to be done. There was silence, till Stevens said he supposed it was too late *now* to do anything but fight. No one else seems to have spoken,

but it is said that de Kalb thought they had better regain the position at Rugeley's Mills, and there await the British attack.

At daybreak of the 15th of August Cornwallis advanced in column—the light infantry on the right, the Irish Volunteers and the North Carolina regiment on the left; Tarleton leading the cavalry. Gates had also formed in two lines—the Maryland division on the right, with the Delawares, commanded by de Kalb; the Virginia Militia, under Stevens, on the left; Caswell and the North Carolina Militia in the centre. Both his flanks were covered by a marsh. As Cornwallis advanced, the American artillery opened fire, and Gates ordered the Virginians to attack the British right. They were young troops, not seasoned, and when the British rushed on, shouting and firing as they came, the Virginians threw down their muskets and fled. The panic spread to the North Carolinians. Tarleton charged, and put them to headlong flight. Gates himself, trying to rally them, was carried along with them. The day was hazy, with no wind; both the British and American accounts speak of the thick smoke from the firing which hung over the field of battle—Cornwallis calls it "a thick darkness," and says that neither side could see the effect of a fire "which was well-supported on both sides." For in this extraordinary battle Gates, with one half of his army, was retreating, not knowing that the other half was fighting on; while the other half went on fighting, not knowing that its General and the first half had run away. The Marylanders and the Delawares stood firm, and made an obstinate resistance for three-quarters of an hour—several times broken, but always rallying again, and even facing the bayonet. But at last Tarleton charged them in flank, and threw them into confusion—they fell back on all sides into the woods and swamps. Old de Kalb—who fought on foot with the second Maryland brigade—fell exhausted, with eleven wounds. His aide-de-camp was repeatedly wounded while protecting him. Colonel Williams says, if the militia ran too soon, the regulars fought too long.

It was now a total rout. Tarleton pursued to Hanging Rock, twenty-two miles from the field of battle. Gates lost all his artillery, 2000 stand of arms, his baggage, his waggons—everything. Cornwallis puts the slain at 700 or 800, and 1000 prisoners. De Kalb died a few days after the battle.

The farther the militia fled the more they dispersed, till Gates and Caswell were abandoned by all but their aides. In his retreat Gates learned that Sumpter (to whom he had sent 100 men the day before) had taken the redoubts on the Wateree, with prisoners

and stores, and was marching on the other side of the river with his booty. Nothing could be done now but send him orders to retire; and Gates went on to Charlotte. Only at Hillsborough, 180 miles from Camden, was he able to rally his forces. And Sumpter's triumph was short-lived. Two days after Camden, Cornwallis, afraid lest he should be a rallying-point for the rebels, sent Ferguson one way and Tarleton another, to attack him wherever they could find him. Tarleton got good information, and by "forced and concealed marches," came up with Sumpter next day at noon, as he and his men, worn out with four days and nights of marching and fighting, were resting on the banks of Fishing Creek, near the Catawba Ford. They were scattered about—some lying on the grass under the trees, some bathing in the river—when Tarleton and his dragoons stole up and looked over the crest of the hill. They had stacked their arms—they never reached them. It was more a slaughter than a rout: 150 were killed on the spot, there were 300 prisoners, and the two brass pieces, the 44 waggons, and the hundred British prisoners taken at Hanging Rock. Sumpter himself galloped off without saddle, coat, or hat, and about 350 escaped with him.

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CHAPTER XCV

ARNOLD AND ANDRÉ

"Next to the destruction of Washington's army, the gaining over officers of influence and reputation among the troops would be the speediest means of subduing the rebellion and restoring the tranquillity of America. Your commission authorises you to avail yourself of such opportunities, and the expense will be cheerfully submitted to."—*Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton*, Sept., 1779.

"I think it perfectly right that Mr. Deane should so far be trusted as to have three thousand pounds in goods for America; the giving him particular instructions would be liable to much hazard, but his bringing any of the provinces to offer to return to their allegiance on the former foot would be much better than by joint application through the Congress; for if, by the breaking off of some, the rest are obliged to yield, no farther concert, or perhaps amity, can subsist between them, which would not be the case in the other mode, and the fire might be smothered to break out again on the first occasion."—*The King to Lord North*, March 3, 1781, 54 min. pt. 8 a.m.

"I have received Lord North's boxes containing the intercepted letters of Mr. Deane for America. I have only been able to read two, on which I form the same opinion of too much appearance of being connected with this country, and therefore not likely to have the effect as if they bore another aspect."—*The King to Lord North*, July 19, 1781, 2 min. pt. [1] p.m.

In April, 1780, Lafayette returned to America. He told Washington that he had persuaded the King to send another fleet and army—but this was to be a secret. By this time Arnold had involved himself in such difficulties that he made a proposal to M. de Luzerne, the new French Envoy, to become a secret agent of France in return for a sum equal to his debts. De Luzerne did not like it, and politely put him off.

At last, in May, the long-suffering troops were at the end of their patience. Two Connecticut regiments assembled on the 25th to beat of drum, and said they would go home, bag and baggage, or else "gain a subsistence at the point of the bayonet." They even struck a colonel who tried to pacify them. They were reminded of their good services, and of the promises of Congress. But they were tired of promises—they wanted performances. Even after they had been coaxed back to their

huts, some of them came out a second time — these were arrested.

This troubled Washington most of all. The indifference of the country almost drove him to despair. He would be unable to co-operate with the French! He discovered that handbills were being secretly distributed, exhorting soldiers to desert. Above all, he felt the shame of responding thus to the efforts France was making. He wrote to Congress that this could not go on. There was no central authority. "I see one head gradually changing into thirteen. I see one army branching into thirteen, each dependent on its respective state."

And in the midst of it all, a handbill, printed in New York, was circulated in his army. It announced that Charlestown had capitulated on the 12th of May.

Washington's situation was perfectly well known. Believing that the rebel army was breaking up, Knyphausen started out to take advantage of the crisis. On June 6 he landed at Elizabethtown, with 5000 men. It was to be a surprise, but the American sentinel heard the march of the first division, and gave the alarm, and the Jersey line had begun to assemble even before Simcoe's Rangers, with their drawn swords and glittering helmets, passed through Elizabethtown, followed by the British and Hessians. The signal-beacons were kindled, the whole country was up. At Connecticut Farms, Maxwell's Jersey Brigade made a stand, but Knyphausen brought up his artillery and drove the Americans back. Then, angry at being resisted, his men pillaged the houses and set them on fire. Mrs. Caldwell, wife of the Rev. James Caldwell, whose chapel at Elizabethtown was burnt last January, had taken refuge with her children in a back room. She was sitting on the bed, holding one child by the hand, and praying, when a soldier fired in at the window. She fell dead. The house was set on fire, and her body was rescued with difficulty.

Half a mile from Springfield Knyphausen halted. The village stood at the foot of the Short Hills, by Rahway River; on the hills above were Washington and his army—no longer mutinous and on the point of disbanding, but eager to fight. Washington had reached that post in the afternoon, and he waited to repel the enemy from that vantage ground. It was now evening. In the morning Knyphausen was gone. As soon as he found there would be Washington to encounter, he retreated to Elizabethtown.

Mrs. Caldwell was probably killed by a random shot, but her death produced almost as great an impression as the death of Jennie McCrea.

On the 17th Clinton returned from the South. He landed his troops on Staten Island, and immediately re-embarked them, as though he meant to go up the Hudson. Instantly Washington thought of West Point, and moved his main body towards Pompton. But Clinton did not mean West Point yet; he was covering another raid of Knyphausen's. Very early on June 23, Knyphausen marched on Springfield, hoping to surprise Greene, who had been left at the Short Hills. One hundred and seventy Americans held 1500 British in check for a quarter of an hour, at the bridge on the Vauxhall road, but were forced to retire, and Knyphausen marched into the town, and burned every house but four. As usual, the victory was followed by an evacuation. Before Washington could arrive, the British had retreated, harassed by the Americans all the way back to Elizabethtown. They crossed to Staten Island at once, and by six in the morning of the 24th the Jerseys were finally evacuated. Jersey had had her share of the war, and this was the last of it. Meanwhile Congress had sent Gates to command in the South.

On the 10th of July the French fleet, under the Chevalier de Ternay, arrived at Rhode Island—seven ships of the line, two frigates, and two "bombs," with transports carrying 5000 men. It was the first division of the army which Lafayette had gone home to procure for Washington. The Comte de Rochambeau commanded the new French troops—under Washington, who was appointed "Lieutenant-General of his Most Christian Majesty's troops in America, and Vice-Admiral of the White Flag." Rochambeau said he only brought the vanguard of a much greater force—the second division of the fleet was in Brest harbour, only waiting for transports. Newport illuminated. There was great joy, and an attack on New York was at once projected.

But on the 13th Admiral Graves arrived at New York with six ships of the line. This gave the British so great a superiority, that the contemplated attack could not be risked until the arrival of either the second division of de Ternay's fleet, or de Guichen's West India squadron. Clinton proposed to attack the French by sea and land. Arbuthnot thought them too strong. Clinton, who had got as far as Huntingdon Bay in Long Island, was obliged to come back. He never forgave Arbuthnot.

The moment Washington heard that Clinton had left New York, he resolved to strike a blow in his absence. By a rapid march, he passed the North River with 12,000 men, to move on Kingsbridge. It happened that as he was watching the passage of his last division, General Arnold rode up—he had just arrived

in the camp. In the course of conversation, Arnold asked Washington whether any place had been assigned to himself. "The left wing—the post of honour," replied Washington. To the great surprise of Washington, Arnold was silent. He was still more surprised to find that Arnold had asked for the command of West Point. It was a most important command, including the great fortress at West Point and all the posts from Fishkill to King's Ferry; and as there were constant fears of a sudden attack, it demanded the utmost vigilance in its commanding officer. Yet it was strange that Arnold, of all men, should ask for a garrison post, when he might have commanded the left wing in the attack on New York. He explained it by saying that his wounded leg still unfitted him for active service. And after all, that attack never came off. Clinton returned as hastily as he had set out, and Washington recrossed the river, and retired to Tappan (Orangetown) on the borders of Jersey, on the west side of Hudson, opposite Dobbs' Ferry. There he would be near, in case opportunity offered for a dash at New York. But all his plans against New York seemed destined to disappointment. He now learned that the second division of the French fleet was blockaded in Brest harbour by the British. There still remained de Guichen, and there were hopes of a Spanish fleet from Cadiz. But the Spanish fleet in the West Indies was eaten up with sickness, and the French and Spanish Admirals had fallen out. General Arnold was loud in denouncing the reposing of trust in foreign aid, and many agreed with him.

Congress had chosen this moment to quarrel with Greene, and Washington had the utmost difficulty in persuading them not to suspend him. He represented to them that if they used their best officers in this manner, he doubted if an officer of the whole line would hold a commission beyond the end of the present campaign—if so long. "Such an act in the most despotic government would be attended at least with loud complaints."

Early in September he heard that Gates had been totally routed at Camden, had lost all his cannon and baggage, and had fled 180 miles, to Hillsborough, before he could make a stand and rally his scattered troops. It was more necessary than ever to strike a blow somewhere. News came that de Guichen was on his way. On the 21st of September Washington went to Hartford, to confer with the French officers, and arrange a plan of concerted operations. The same day he learned that de Guichen was gone back to France with the West India convoy!

De Guichen could not help himself—his men were sick, and his ships much battered in their long service among the islands. Neither ships nor men were fit to encounter the storms and the enemies that awaited them on the American coasts. But the Americans did not know de Guichen's plight. They were furious—Washington not the least so. That great commander was not the colourless piece of impersonal perfection he is sometimes represented. He had a temper which on one of the few occasions when he allowed it to break out cowed even Charles Lee. It is said that this was one of the occasions on which he lost his temper. Of course the attack on New York was now impossible. The British naval force had been again increased by eleven ships on the 14th, when Sir George Rodney arrived. There was a great deal of movement at New York—something was evidently afoot. It was given out that the British expected an attack. After the news of Camden came, Clinton had grown bolder, and had lately sent an armed sloop—the *Vulture*—up the Hudson, to Teller's Point, within five miles of Verplanck's Point, where there was an American post, commanded by Colonel Livingston.

West Point was now the most important post in North America. Until 1778 it had been an almost inaccessible solitude. Then its value for defence was perceived, and Kosciusko covered it with fortresses and redoubts, so connected with one another as to form one system. The great stores of ammunition were kept here. It was so important that its command was not unworthy the acceptance of General Arnold.

Washington had arranged to visit West Point on his way back from Hartford—he had promised to show Lafayette the new works. In consequence of the disappointment of his plans, Washington returned from Hartford to his headquarters on the Hudson some days earlier than was expected. He had with him Lafayette and Count Dumas, Rochambeau's secretary. The Count has described the enthusiasm of the people as Washington passed through the towns—how in one the children came out with torches, and the people thronged about him till the officers could hardly make their way through the crowd. Washington, much affected, said to Dumas, "We may be beaten by the English; but there is an army here that they will never conquer." But he, who had foreseen so many dangers, did not dream that at that very moment the greatest peril which had ever threatened the American cause was gathering unseen. That very night André was crossing the Hudson on his secret visit to Arnold.

Just a year before, Germaine had written to Clinton: "Next to the destruction of Washington's army, the gaining over officers of influence and reputation among the troops would be the speediest means of subduing the rebellion, and restoring the tranquillity of America. Your commission authorises you to avail yourself of such opportunities, and the expense will be cheerfully submitted to."

Washington was to have reached West Point on Sunday, September 24, but a chance meeting at Fishkill with the Chevalier de Luzerne—the new French Minister—caused the delay of a day, and the salvation of the United States, for it brought Washington to West Point early on the morning of the 25th. Had he arrived on the 24th, as arranged, he would have been gone before the messenger from Jamieson arrived, Arnold would have got possession of André and his papers, and the plot would have taken effect. It was a question of hours—almost of minutes.

Arnold's headquarters were at the Robinson House—belonging to the loyalist Colonel Beverley Robinson, then in New York with Clinton. The house was on one side of the Hudson, and the fortress on the other. Wishing to look at a redoubt on the same side of the river as the house, Washington sent on his aides to beg Mrs. Arnold (who had lately joined her husband) not to wait breakfast. As he rode up to the house, after inspecting the redoubt, he noticed a barge, with a white flag, just disappearing round the farthest visible point down river. At the house he found everything in confusion, and Mrs. Arnold in hysterics. Arnold had received a letter while at breakfast, had exclaimed that he must go instantly to West Point, and after a few words in private with Mrs. Arnold had galloped down the very steep path to the water, where his barge, with six oarsmen, was always waiting. He had set off down stream—it must have been his barge that Washington had seen.[1] Mrs. Arnold appeared half-distracted—she was screaming that there was a plot to kill her child. Lieutenant Allen, who had brought the letter, said it was from Colonel Jamieson, the officer commanding at North Castle, far down, on the edge of the "Neutral Ground,"—a belt from twenty to thirty miles wide, between the British and American lines. Allen knew no more than that a person suspected to be a spy had been taken that morning near Tarrytown.

[1] Arnold sat in the stern of the barge, with a pistol in each hand, in case of pursuit. He gained the *Vulture* in safety, and she instantly set sail for New York.

Washington went over to West Point, but Arnold was not there, nor had the officer in charge seen him for two days. Washington inspected the works, and was being rowed back across the river, when he saw Major Hamilton hurrying down to the landing-place. Another messenger had arrived from Colonel Jamieson, bringing the papers taken on the spy.

They were the plans of West Point, the disposition of the guards, the number of men, stores, etc.; and other papers showed that Arnold had planned to betray the fortress, and that the time fixed was the night of the 26th—to-morrow night! There was also a letter from the spy himself, addressed to General Washington, and dated from Salem, the day before. It said—

"The person in your possession is Major John André, Adjutant-General of the British army."

As it was possible the surprise might still be attempted, Washington made his dispositions to receive an attack. But the traitor himself brought the news of André's capture to New York, and consternation succeeded to the sure hopes of crushing the rebellion by the seizure of West Point.

The details of the plot were diabolically clever. Under cover of an expedition to the Chesapeak, Rodney was superintending the embarkation of troops on the Hudson. The British were to land a select corps on a table-land upon the western shore of the river, and go up the mountain to the height behind Fort Putnam, whence they could have looked down on the parade of West Point. Arnold would have so disposed his troops that they could have offered very little resistance. Clinton was to command in person, and to lay siege to the great Fort Defiance—the largest of the works at West Point, enclosing seven acres of ground. Arnold was to send instantly to Washington for aid, and while the messenger went, was to surrender—so timing his surrender as to enable Clinton to surprise the reinforcement. It was the last crowning infamy that Arnold believed Washington would lead the reinforcement in person. "The key of the country would have been in the hands of the British." And besides the loss of the fortresses, and of the men intended to form the left wing of the army when the grand attack should be made on New York, Washington's main army would have been so exposed that he could not possibly have held his ground. The scheme was formed, and carried to the very eve of execution, without exciting the smallest suspicion. It failed at the eleventh hour, by a hair's-breadth, by one or two small circumstances, not one of them in itself of any

importance. The chief of these was Livingston's cannonade of the *Vulture*, and her consequent falling down stream.

Livingston, at Verplanck's Point, became uneasy at seeing the *Vulture* so high up, and sent a party with cannon to open fire upon her at daybreak of the 22nd. At that moment André was conferring with Arnold in Joshua Smith's house at Haverstraw. The *Vulture* had brought André up the river, and was waiting to take him back again. When the cannonade began, she fell down stream, out of range. The other posts on the river were alarmed by the firing, and Arnold—greatly to André's discomfiture—decided that there would be less risk in his returning by land. This first *contretemps* led to all the rest. As a first consequence, André was forced to change his coat—which Clinton had strictly forbidden him to do. The act made him a spy. He had already involuntarily passed the American lines, in coming up to Smith's house, from the bushes of Long Clove, where he had talked with Arnold all night, expecting then to get off by water. Even then, however, if he had obeyed Arnold's directions, and gone by North Castle instead of by Tarrytown, he would probably have reached New York safely. He had passed the dangerous part of his journey, and had gained the "Neutral Ground," when he made the fatal mistake of choosing the wrong turning at the fork of the roads beyond Crompound. The Neutral Ground was much infested by lawless parties, some professing friendliness to one side, some to the other, and known respectively as Cow-boys and Skinners.[1] Arnold had strictly enjoined André not to go by Tarrytown, as there were Cow-boys about. But André did not fear the Cow-boys—they would be friends. Believing that he ran much less risk of being stopped on the Tarrytown road, he took it. Even then, in all human probability, he would have got safe to New York if he had not fallen in with a small party from the Neutral Ground, who had turned out to avenge the death of a farmer, shot dead by Cow-boys two nights before, in his own yard, as he ran out in his nightshirt to save his horses. Seven young "Skinners" banded themselves together to punish the murderers and get back the horses for the widow. One of these young men had been a prisoner of war in the Sugar House. His captors had taken away his good coat, and given him a ragged "refugee coat" instead. He was wearing this coat now. And so, when he asked André whether he was from "above" or "below," André, seeing

[1] The Cow-boys professed to be loyalists. The Skinners were on the American side. Both were marauders. They were also known as "the party from above," or "from below"—below meaning New York.

the coat, said, "from below." Never was spy so unfit for his business as this charming and unfortunate young Swiss![1] He had had ample time to consider what to say if he were stopped. He might have reflected that it was safer to mistake a Cow-boy for a Skinner, than a Skinner for a Cow-boy. At the worst, the Cow-boy would have taken him to New York. But, having once avowed that he came from New York, no entreaties could move the Skinners to let him go. In vain he offered them five hundred guineas, a thousand guineas, to deliver him to the British post at King's Bridge. The more he offered, the more certain they were that this was a spy—and a very important spy. They searched him—found papers concealed in his stockings, and, deaf to all his entreaties, carried him to Colonel Jamieson at North Castle.

Washington did not preside, and was not present at the court-martial which tried André. Great as was the sympathy felt even by his enemies for the prisoner, and deep the regret for his fate, there could be but one verdict. André's plea—that he was not a spy, because he had a pass from an American General—can never have appeared serious, even to himself. It is strange to find Cornwallis' biographer calling the death of André "a blot on Washington's name." Is the death of Nathan Hale a blot on Howe's?

In 1776, just after the Battle of Long Island, when it was of the utmost importance to Washington to learn the strength of the British, Nathan Hale, a student of Yale, volunteered to go over to Brooklyn. He was recognised at the last moment by a Tory neighbour, and denounced. The Latin memoranda he had made, and the plans he had drawn, were found upon him. He was carried before Howe, and after a brief parley was ordered for execution at daybreak. The brutal Provost Marshal Cunningham refused his request for a Bible, and destroyed a letter he wrote to his mother on the last night of his life—giving as his reason that "the rebels should never know they had a man who could die with such firmness." By a curious coincidence, Major Tallmadge—who persuaded Jamieson not to send André back to West Point, as he was at first for doing—was a college-friend of Nathan Hale. Tallmadge[2] became deeply attached to the unhappy prisoner while

[1] André had, however, got into and out of Charlestown in disguise, during the siege, and had persuaded Clinton to let him undertake this business.

[2] At the beginning of his imprisonment, André asked Tallmadge what would be his fate? Tallmadge asked him if he remembered Nathan Hale?

It was never known when Arnold first began his treason. For some weeks he had corresponded with André under the name of "Mr. Gustavus." There is a letter of September 7, 1780, from André, and another from "Gustavus," in which the affair is spoken of as though it were a commercial transaction.

guarding him—indeed, the abhorrence felt for Arnold was intensified by pity for André.

There was but one way in which André could have been saved—and that was by the giving up of Arnold. Gladly would Clinton have made the exchange! But it was impossible. It has been said that at one moment Arnold declared he would go back and die—but even if he were sincere, Clinton could not have permitted it. He was already sufficiently humiliated. A rescue was thought of, and Simcoe and the Rangers hovered on the American lines till all was over. But Washington had put his whole army between them and his prisoner. The kidnapping of Arnold was also thought of. At great risk to themselves, a little band of Provincials got into New York, to carry him off; the traitor was too wary, but he had a narrow escape. He wrote an insolent letter, threatening terrible reprisals if André were hanged; but his new friends' honour forbade their giving him up, and nothing else was of any use.

CHAPTER XCVI

THE DISSOLUTION: THE RUPTURE WITH HOLLAND

"Gentlemen, I decline the election . . . I have not canvassed the whole of this city in form. But I have taken such a view of it, as satisfies my own mind, that your choice will not ultimately fall upon me. . . . If I were fond of a contest . . . I have the means of a sharp one in my hands. But I thought it better . . . to do early, and from foresight that which I might be obliged to do from necessity at last. . . . I will see nothing except your former kindness. . . . You have given me a long term. . . . What is passed is well stored. It is safe, and out of the power of fortune. What is to come, is in wiser hands than ours; and He, in whose hands it is, best knows whether it is best for you and me, that I should be in parliament, or even in the world."—*Burke's Speech on the Hustings at Bristol*, Sept. 19, 1780.

"That Lord North should feel a little languid on the approach of the meeting of Parliament is not surprising; it is far from being a pleasant sensation, even to me."—*The King to Lord North*, Oct. 25, 1780, 19 min. pt. 9 a.m.

"Indeed, he thought that such as without scruple, in print and conversation, called the war unjust, and thus presumed to brand and stigmatize a measure sanctified by the British parliament, were guilty of an offence which ought to be followed by punishment; and if the laws, as they now stood, were not equal to the correction of this evil . . . other laws should be passed. He had at the beginning of the war with America thought it unjust . . . but . . . he had never conceived he should be warranted in terming it so without doors, after parliament had chosen to pronounce the war just."—*Mr. Pulteney on the Address of Thanks*, Nov. 6, 1780.

THE dissolution of the Fourteenth Parliament came as a thunderclap. To throw the country off its guard, Parliament had been again prorogued only a few days before. The General Election was sprung on the nation, and the shortest possible time was allowed to prepare for it.[1] It was said that Wedderburn—now Lough-

[1] It was not a new thought—there had been preparations. On May 3, 1780, Robinson advises the King to let the six houses "standing in the name of Mr. Ramus" be entered in the names of six different members of the royal Household; and the same day, the King tells Robinson that Lord North wishes to support Mr. Powney for New Windsor: "I shall in consequence, get my tradesmen encouraged to appear for him," and will act on Mr. Robinson's hint, and order "the houses I rent at Windsor" to stand in different names of my

borough—had advised dissolution, as the Court was losing ground. The device answered. The middle classes were afraid of Popery, and some of the most popular members in Opposition lost their seats on this account—others, because they had voted for free trade with Ireland. Burke had offended on both these questions; and when he went down to Bristol to meet his old constituents, he soon found there was no chance of his being returned. He made two great speeches in Bristol Guildhall, and tried to make his old friends ashamed of the Penal Laws, by showing them the motives which had originally inspired them, the odium of the laws themselves, and their folly—which he thought almost surpassed their wickedness. "The whole body of the Catholics, condemned to beggary and ignorance in their native land," had to learn the principles of letters "from the charity of your enemies." He showed them that the iniquitous law which punished with imprisonment for life the saying of Mass, was only relaxed because the Judges, "superseding the strict rule of their artificial duty by the higher obligation of their conscience," now throw every difficulty in the way of informers.[1]

"Gentlemen, bad laws are the worst sort of tyranny. In such a country as this they are worse by far than anywhere else . . . you cannot trust the Crown with a dispensing power over any of your laws." He showed them that "the *whole* House of Commons; the *whole* House of Lords; the *whole* Bench of Bishops; the King; the Ministry; the Opposition; all the distinguished Clergy of the Establishment; all the eminent lights (for they were consulted) of the Dissenting Churches," had agreed to the repeal of the Penal Laws. He reminded them of the loyal conduct of English Catholics, and how when France acknowledged American independence—then, "in the hour of our dismay," the whole body of Catholics presented one of the most sober and dutiful addresses

servants, as it will create six votes.—*Abergavenny Papers*, p. 30. "He [Rigby] is most exceeding eager and anxious about the speedy, or rather immediate, dissolution of Parliament. . . . Our opponents are depressed; the nation is set against riots and rioters of all kinds; events have been favourable beyond conception. Will you wait to give our enemies time to rally and reunite, and for some blow in our military operations to turn the tide of popularity against us?"—*Sandwich to Robinson*, August 1, 1780.

[1] "It was but the other day, that a lady of condition, beyond the middle of life, was on the point of being stripped of her whole fortune by a near relation, to whom she had been a friend and benefactor: and she must have been totally ruined, without a power of redress or mitigation from the Courts of Law, had not the legislature itself rushed in, and by a special act of Parliament rescued her from the injustice of its own statutes."

ever presented to the Crown. "It was no holiday ceremony." It proved that they meant to cast in their lot with England. To reject their petition would have been to reject allegiance. To accept it made us "what we ought always to have been, one family, one body, one heart and soul, against the family-combination, and all other combinations of our enemies."

Thus he reasoned with them; but reasoned in vain. Those who called themselves True Protestants were incapable of understanding that any man could possibly wish to tolerate opinions differing from his own. If he is for toleration, it can only be because he has a sneaking sympathy with those opinions. And so Burke was called a Jesuit, and many really believed that he was secretly a Papist. But the Irish question had also great weight at Bristol. Bristol always looked upon the prosperity of Ireland as so much taken out of the pocket of Bristol—Bristol wanted to shut out Irish cattle, and everything Irish, and as a rule Bristol had succeeded in doing so. Burke made few more noble and dignified speeches than that in which he withdrew his candidature.[1]

There was a story that his Majesty condescended to canvass in person for Mr. Portlock Powney, who had been set up by the Court for Windsor against Admiral Keppel. One "stout Keppelite," a silk-mercer, affirmed that his Majesty said in his quick way, "The Queen wants a gown—wants a gown—No Keppel! No Keppel!" Mr. Powney had a majority of 16 votes, and in his speech from the hustings at the close of the poll, the Admiral alluded to the report that the King had personally opposed him. "This," said Keppel significantly, "cannot be true. It OUGHT not to be believed; it MUST not be believed!"[2]

[1] An anonymous letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine* gives the reasons for Burke's rejection. One was, his "pernicious maxim" of not obeying the voice of his constituents"—he had even said that "he was not to be instructed." They elected him to oppose the American war and support Lord Rockingham; but he went farther, supported Lord Beauchamp's Bill for Insolvent Debtors; and worse still, "when the Irish Bills were agitated," he "considered first the interests of his native country," and behaved "more like a representative for Cork or Dublin than a member for a trading city in England." But what finally determined Bristol to "withdraw their good opinion from Mr. Burke, was the very strenuous and remarkable efforts he made in support of the Roman Catholic Bill."

[2] But Keppel was returned for the County of Surrey by a majority of 516 over the Government candidate. "The Surrey voters, that came from Windsor and about that place, returned with the utmost speed to announce my victory to the inhabitants of Windsor. The cannon were soon firing, and the bells ringing, and almost every house was lighted. I have been told his Majesty said that it would possibly be a busy night, and had recommended a sergeant

Admiral Rodney was returned for Westminster in his absence; and although Rodney was the Tory Admiral, his proxy, Admiral Young, dined with Fox at the dinner given to celebrate the latter's return—for Rodney owed more to Fox's friends than to the ministerialists, who supported another candidate of their own. Upon the whole, however, this election went much in favour of the Court—so much so, that it was said to be the cheapest election for a century; for Opposition candidates were tired of spending a fortune to get into Parliament, only to be voted down day after day, until their opposition became a farce. And so the country gave the new Parliament a new mandate to go on with the American war, and all the other wars. And Ministers felt themselves so firm in the saddle, that the first act of the new Parliament was to get rid of Sir Fletcher Norton. He was not a high-minded man, but he had occasionally shown a reprehensible spirit of independence; the Court had had its eye on him, ever since he told the King he hoped he would make a wise use of the money the people gave him. He was got rid of on a shallow pretence of ill-health, and Wolfran Cornwall, a place-man, a pensioner, a member for one of the Cinque Ports, and Jenkinson's brother-in-law, was elected in his stead. But the House insisted on passing a vote of thanks to Fletcher.

The Fourteenth Parliament was dissolved on the 1st of September, and the Fifteenth met on the 31st of October, 1780.

Before it met, the news of Camden had come. Gates, the victor at Saratoga, and 7000 Americans, had run from Cornwallis with 2000! Nine hundred rebels were slain, and 1500 taken, and the whole force of rebellion was shattered in the South. There was

and twelve privates, with loaded arms, to patrol the streets." Next day the Prince of Wales and Prince Frederick (the Duke of York) expressed to Keppel's friends their undisguised pleasure, and to one friend at least, "they said, *we* have had a most complete victory."—*Keppel to Lord Rockingham*, October 11, 1780.

The Duke of Sussex told Lord Albemarle he was locked up in the nursery at Windsor for wearing Keppel's colours.—Albemarle, *Life of Rockingham*; Keppel, *Life of Admiral Keppel.*

Some of the bills seem to have been disputed.

"I suppose the following sums will do. Ld S[heffield] £2000, and Mr. D[aubeny] £1500, being £500 more than he asked for at first. . . . Try to do this business as cheaply as possible. You will find it difficult enough to raise even the lowest sum. Mr. Powney stipulated at first only for £1000. He has, I believe, had £1500 or £2000. What does he want now? . . . The demands on this occasion are exorbitant beyond the example of any former time."—*Lord North to Robinson*, April 13, 1781.

also the good news of the sickness on board the Spanish fleet.[1] There was not a man in the new Parliament who did not think the war as good as over—triumphantly over.

The King's Speech contained nothing about Holland, but we were on the point of war. On the 12th of September, Captain Keppel in the *Vesta*, and Captain Berkeley in the *Fairy*, arrived at St. John's, Newfoundland, with the *Phœnix* privateer and the *Mercury* packet from Philadelphia, which they had captured off the Bank. The *Mercury* threw her papers overboard, but a sailor rescued them. Among her passengers was Henry Laurens, late President of Congress, and the papers were the draft of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce to be concluded with the Dutch.[2] Laurens was brought to London, and on October 6 was examined by Germaine, Stormont, and Hillsborough, in Downing Street. He acknowledged readily enough that he had been President of Congress, but declined to answer any other questions, as they might incriminate himself. He was committed to the Tower for high treason. There was much excitement in Holland at this. Yorke was ordered to demand a disavowal, and on no answer being given England declared war. Meanwhile France was tired of the war; the French Ministry wanted peace; the French and Spanish Admirals were always falling out, and the King of Spain detested the idea of helping a rebellion. Necker secretly proposed to North that there should be a truce, during which all the belligerents should remain in possession of the territory they held. But the King refused, he said "independency was the same, whether called a truce or not."

When Parliament met on the 1st of November, Opposition made an attempt, on the Address, to get the continuance of the war condemned. The gist of their speeches was—Make peace with America, and concentrate your efforts against the House of Bourbon. Mr. Pulteney said those who called a war "unjust" which "was sanctified" by the British Parliament ought to be punished, and asked for a law to take away "a licentious use of the pen." He did not approve of saying we were fighting to conquer America—the war was a war carried on "to protect our American friends from the tyranny and oppression of Congress." There was

[1] "The sickness on board the Spanish fleet was so great that Admiral Solano landed 1200 sick as soon as he arrived at Dominica, and a much greater number afterwards, at Guadaloupe and Martinique. . . . The distemper was contagious, and spread like a pestilence."—*Annual Register.*

[2] A portrait of Washington, intended as a present for the Stadtholder, was also taken in the *Phœnix.*

a great deal in other speeches about all the Leagues which had failed. Fox showed how every success in America had been the forerunner of some new misfortune, and referred to the Vote on the influence of the Crown as the "last dying speech of that corrupted assembly, the death-bed confession of that wicked sinner, the late Parliament."

The Vote of Thanks to General Clinton for taking Charlestown, and to Earl Cornwallis for the Battle of Camden, called forth a very acrimonious debate on the war. Lord Lewisham (Dartmouth's eldest son), who seconded it, talked of the necessity of destroying the French Navy. If you wish to maintain the glory and independence of England, destroy the marine of France. If you wish to preserve the balance of power, destroy the marine of France. If you wish to preserve the liberties and rights of mankind, destroy the marine of France. And so on; *Delenda est Carthago.* Wilkes, in a long speech, reminded the House that Cornwallis was one of five Peers who had strenuously denied our right to tax America, and had voted against the Declaratory Act. Wilkes refused to thank the Generals for shedding the blood of our fellow-subjects. He wanted to fight the French and the Spaniards—not the Americans. As for Independence—a country much larger than our European Empire will be independent of us, whatever we may do to prevent it. This most glorious victory of Camden will no doubt in due time be followed by the evacuation of the two Carolinas. [They were already being evacuated as he spoke.] Sheridan asked why Clinton was not thanked before? Was he only thanked now, that Cornwallis might be thanked too? It was a very curious debate, contradictory, foolish, illogical; Ministerialists alternately dilating on the great majority of Americans who were loyal, and on the formidable numbers of the rebels whom Cornwallis had vanquished. But no one mentioned the great accession of strength by the coming over to the King of General Arnold, nor was one word said about poor André.

There was other bad news. The October of 1780 was marked by a succession of hurricanes in the West Indies, so terrible as to be national calamities. They began on the 3rd, when the town of Savannah-la-Mar in Jamaica was almost swept away in a few minutes. "The waves, swelled to an amazing height, rushed with an impetuosity not to be described on the land, and in a few minutes determined the fate of all the houses on the bay." Forty persons, white and coloured, who had taken refuge in the Court House, perished by the collapse of the building. At ten at night,

just as the waters began to abate, there was an earthquake shock. All the small vessels in the bay were driven ashore, and dashed to pieces. Several others were forced from their anchors, and carried into the morass. In the morning the bodies of dead and dying lay "scattered about where the town stood." Hundreds of people perished, and the plantations were all destroyed.

But the hurricane of the 10th was far worse. It swept over the Leeward Islands, till it reduced those little paradises to deserts. At Sta. Lucia all the barracks and huts for the troops were blown down, and the ships driven out to sea. At St. Vincent not a house was left standing. The *Juno*, a new French frigate of 40 guns, was driven ashore and dashed to pieces. At Martinique the ships that were bringing troops and provisions were blown off the island. Every house at St. Pierre was down, and more than 1000 persons perished there—the loss of life at sea was never accurately known, but many and many a good ship was never heard of more. On the 12th four ships foundered in Fort Royal Bay, and not a soul was saved. The Dutch Island of St. Eustatius —the great emporium, soon to become so famous—fared the same. At ten o'clock on the morning of October 10 the sky suddenly "blackened all around," and the most violent storm ever known set in, with wind, rain, thunder and lightning. In the afternoon seven ships bound for Europe drove on shore at North Point, and went to pieces—and every soul perished. Nineteen other ships hastily cut their cables and stood out to sea. In the night every house to north and south was blown down, or washed with its inhabitants into the sea. The east and west had suffered less—but suddenly on the afternoon of the 11th the wind shifted to the eastward, and blowing all that night with redoubled fury, swept every house away there too.

But the hurricane at Barbadoes is described as exceeding all the rest in fury. It came with a strangely fiery sunset, after a remarkably calm day. Much rain fell during that night, with a high wind, increasing to a gale in the morning (October 10). By one o'clock the ships in the bay drove from their moorings. At four the *Albemarle* frigate parted her cables, and with twenty-five other vessels was driven out to sea. Trees were being stripped bare of their leaves, or torn up bodily by the roots, and the wind was still increasing. At Government House the windows and doors had been barricaded, but by ten o'clock the wind was sweeping through the house. The Governor and his family took refuge in a circular room in the middle of the house, with walls three feet thick; but the wind soon tore off the roof, and they retreated to

the cellar. They were driven out of the cellar by the water, which rose to four feet. Walls were falling all around. In desperation they made for the battery, and crouched under the cannon—in imminent danger of being crushed as they lay, for the wind moved even the heavy guns. The air was full of flying fragments; the wind had levelled the armoury, and was scattering the arms. So they lay all night, trembling lest by some chance the powder magazine should blow up. When morning broke, a dreadful scene met their eyes—the most beautiful island in the world was a desolation—"the most luxuriant spring had changed to the dreariest winter." The whole face of the country was "like one entire river." Not one house on the island was uninjured—very few were still standing. The barracks and the hospital had been among the first to go. All the naval stores were destroyed. A 12-pounder had been carried 140 yards by the force of wind and sea. As the foundations of the strongest building were rent, it was supposed that there had been an earthquake, which the violence of the wind prevented anyone from feeling! The loss of life—men and cattle—was very great. General Vaughan and his secretary barely escaped with their lives. Many were carried into the sea and drowned. The soldiers suffered the least—the greater number of the dead were negroes.

The damage done at sea was terrible. Several of Hotham's squadron were lost—two with all hands. The rest were crippled and useless till refitted. Rodney, then off St. Domingo, lost six ships. Parliament voted £80,000 for Barbadoes, and £40,000 for Jamaica.

On the 20th of December, war was declared with Holland.

At the beginning of the American war, Holland, like other European Powers, forbade the export of warlike stores for one year. But ever since the Declaration of Independence an illicit trade had been carried on, and a great deal of soreness was caused by the part played by the Dutch West India Islands, in affording shelter to American privateers, especially at St. Eustatius, where a salute had been fired for a rebel ship. For this Sir Joseph Yorke had been instructed to demand the recall of the Governor, and though the States-General complied, and denied that they intended to recognise the independence of the United States, they were so angry that they ordered their Envoy in London to correspond no more with Yorke, but to communicate with the King in person. From this time there was "a sullen civility" on the part of the Dutch, and something rather less on ours. The

more openly France favoured the Americans the less pretence at concealment was there in Holland; and between the French and Dutch ports, American privateers could always dispose of their prizes, and find harbours of refuge for themselves. It was irritating, but it might be asked whether it would not have been wiser to wink at a good deal, rather than add a fourth war to the three we had already on our hands. As usual, during this whole contest we did not declare war, but we began to make it, so far as seizing Dutch ships was concerned. The Dutch merchants complained to the States-General, the Dutch Ambassador complained to King George, and at first a mild answer was returned. France had wantonly provoked us — we had perhaps been too rigorous in stopping neutral vessels, and if any cargoes not contraband had been seized they should be restored. Sir Joseph Yorke, an excellent representative of his country, reminded the States-General that under the treaties of 1678 and 1716 Great Britain could have demanded "succours," and had shown great moderation in not doing so.

There were two parties in Holland — the party of the Stadtholder, and the French faction, as it was called. This latter was particularly strong in Amsterdam—so much so that when the French Court withdrew the permission for free trade, Amsterdam was excepted. The French left nothing undone to encourage the "French faction"; the Stadtholder was weak, and when Spain had joined the fray the British Government began to grow desperate. Yorke presented a Memorial, reproaching the States for aiding their old enemy France against England, their old friend; and the complicated system of Dutch government made it easy to delay giving a categorical answer. We demanded that Paul Jones should be given up to us, "as a pirate and rebel." The States-General refused. They had nothing to do with the legality of the captures made by any other country; they allowed ships to take shelter in their ports from storms or disasters; they would compel them to put to sea again without opening their cargoes — beyond this they would not go. Nor would they help us against America. They even said they should send a convoy with their next fleet to France. Then came the affair of Count Byland at the end of 1779.

In the first days of January, 1781, de Rullecourt made an attempt to surprise Jersey. Half his force was driven back to France by a storm, but the rash commander landed

the rest, seized St. Heliers in the night of the 6th, took prisoner Major Corbet, the Deputy-Governor, and tricked him into signing a capitulation, by representing that he had 5000 men in the island. Two captains refused to surrender Elizabeth Castle at the order of a governor who was a prisoner, and fired on the advancing force, though de Rullecourt had put his unlucky prisoner in front. Meantime Major Pierson, of the 95th, seized a hill, and threatened to charge in twenty minutes if de Rullecourt did not surrender. In the short, sharp action which followed the French were completely defeated, and compelled to surrender. The gallant young Major, who thus saved Jersey, fell in the moment of victory —he was not yet twenty-five. Corbet's ignominy was crowned by de Rullecourt clutching him by the arm, declaring he should share his fate, and holding him under a storm of shot until he himself fell mortally wounded. Corbet, who escaped unhurt, except in his honour, was cashiered, and Pierson's name is remembered with Wolfe's.

As soon as Parliament reassembled after the recess, the King's Message and all the papers on "the Rupture with Holland" were laid before the House.[1] Among the papers was the "Treaty"—or rather the plan of a treaty, and rather with the province of Holland than with the United Provinces. The States-General do not seem to have been consulted, and it might almost have been described as a treaty with the City of Amsterdam, for Van Berkel, the Pensionary of that City, was a contracting party. But the great merchants of Amsterdam were so powerful in the Province, and the Province was so powerful in the States-General, that Congress knew the treaty would be practically as much a Dutch treaty as the French was a French treaty.

Very long debates followed, on the justifications of the war. Among the reasons alleged were the secret assistance given to America—while withholding from us the help promised by treaties—the protection of "an American pirate" (Paul Jones), and the aid and protection given in the West Indies, particularly at St. Eustatius. Privateers are openly received in Dutch harbours, allowed to refit, supplied with arms, their crews recruited, and their prizes brought in and sold—all in direct violation of clear and solemn stipulations. All this being chiefly the fault of the magistrates of Amsterdam, whose secret correspondence with our rebellious subjects was sus-

[1] January 25, 1781.

pected long before the fortunate discovery of a treaty, of which the first Article declares an inviolable peace with the United States of North America. The King laments that he cannot go to war with Amsterdam alone, but he cannot do this unless the States-General will immediately declare that they will not help Amsterdam. While they back Amsterdam, he is reluctantly compelled to fight them all. Richmond asked for the whole of the papers—(Stormont's silence showed that some were being kept back). He knew the war with Holland was popular, and all opposition would be vain—he believed indeed this would be the last time he should trouble the House upon anything relating to America. The treaty was only a project, the plan for a future treaty sketched out by Van Berkel and Mr. Lee, "the acknowledged subjects of two independent States." It was drawn up two years ago, but there was not a scrap of paper to show that either of the assumed principals ever heard of it, much less approved of it—yet this treaty is made the justification of a war. Stormont retorted that the Dutch had acted "more unfriendly and substantially hostile to us than our natural enemies the French"; for though illicit commerce had gone on for some time before the French declared themselves, they had made some efforts to stop it, whereas The Hague had not attended to one of our remonstrances, and had injured us daily in our most tender part. We should not be in our present situation if St. Eustatius had been destroyed or sunk in the ocean.

Shelburne, in a very able speech, denounced the folly of going to war with a people who were our natural friends, who had been for more than a century our chief security. United, we could support the liberty and independence of Europe. The treaty signed by the Pensionary was only a project, and was only to have effect in a certain contingency —if America were declared independent by the Powers. The only question was, Was this paper binding on the States-General? If not, they were not responsible for it. He explained the Dutch Constitution—the States-General could not exercise sovereign power over separate provinces. Holland was a nation of merchants, and the States-General could not prevent what was done at St. Eustatius—a Dutch Admiral was amenable to his own province, not to the States. Having shown a very minute knowledge of foreign affairs, and proved conclusively that we had more to lose than to gain by this

war, Shelburne came to the state of the nation. All our misfortunes were caused by the American war, which had for its immediate object the increasing the power of the Crown. And what is the situation? General Clinton hemmed in at New York, not a blow struck there for three campaigns. Instead of gaining anything, he has abandoned Rhode Island, and is now writing for 10,000 more men, without which he fears he cannot even hold New York! Will Ministers send them? They know they dare not, they cannot! He challenged Lord Amherst to say whether we had more than 15,000 men to defend us at home—exclusive of militia? (Amherst did not reply.) We have not even the command of the narrow seas, much less the dominion of the ocean—the Channel Fleet secured itself from a pursuing enemy by flight! We have had to order our commanders not to risk a battle with d'Estaing. Cornwallis is acting on the defensive. I cannot believe that the severities he has exercised originated with himself—I know him, we have been old friends and brother-soldiers. He is no less humane than brave. He has acted under orders from home. But what is his situation? He has lost all the advantages of the victory at Camden, has retreated to Charlestown, and is waiting for reinforcements. And though General Leslie has met with little opposition in Virginia, not a single person has come in to him.

Returning to the Dutch war, he asked how we could accuse Holland of a breach of treaties which in 1779 we declared were dissolved?

Camden explained that the old treaties referred to were extremely complicated and difficult to interpret. That of 1674 stipulated that Great Britain and Holland should be at liberty to carry all kinds of goods and merchandise—their own, or that of any other Power—except military stores, even to an enemy actually at war. "And military stores were very different then from what is now considered to be such." Clearly, if the treaty of 1674 does not bind Great Britain, none of the rest can bind Holland. Stormont should have proved that we had adhered to that treaty. But if this new code of Maritime Law is to prevail, and "free bottoms are to make free goods," where do we stand with regard to this treaty?

In the Commons, Opposition complained of the long adjournment when Ministers knew we were on the eve of a new war. This is their way—they take some important step during the

holidays, and then come to tell the House of it, and ask for means to carry it through. Thus we were led into the American war. This is how the French Treaty came to be signed. And the Spanish Rescript. And now comes the Dutch war.

Townshend attributed the rupture in the first place to the Memorial of 1777, called by Suffolk's name, but, he was sure, never written by that noble earl, whom he had loved while living, and would defend when dead. Nor was Sir Joseph Yorke capable of offering such an insult to the State where he had lived for twenty-seven years, loved and respected. The style of that Memorial was so arrogant, that the Dutch complained of it, saying that no independent State ought to address another in such a manner. To the insolence of this Memorial the House should ascribe the prevalence of the French faction in Holland, and not to French gold. And what can we gain by this war? If we destroy Dutch trade, what is that but to destroy our own? For what mercantile nation can carry our manufactures to every part of the globe, as the Dutch have done for more than a century? Again, Ministers seem to have forgotten there is such a thing as the Armed Neutrality, and that the war with Holland might bring down on us the neutral maritime Powers of Europe. The Memorials complain that Holland has not furnished succours —we ought to be very grateful to her for not doing so. We only had a right to expect 6000 troops and twenty ships of war; the instant they were furnished, Holland would have been attacked by France, and then we must have defended her with land and sea forces. He could not see any object in declaring war, unless Ministers hoped to create an insurrection in Amsterdam.

Mr. Eyre made an inflammatory speech, denouncing the action of Holland in the West Indies—he had just had a letter from Antigua, to tell him the Dutch Admiral at St. Eustatius had made the British privateers there give up all their prizes to the original owners. He hoped we should cripple the Dutch. Above all, he hoped soon to hear we had got that nest of pirates, St. Eustatius.

Fox agreed that Suffolk's Memorial of 1777 was the origin of the rupture. It alarmed the pride of Holland, and gave the French faction a handle against the friends of England. All our troubles arose from a change of political opinion—had true Whig principles prevailed, as in the days of King William and Queen Anne, America would have been fighting on our side—

or rather, she would not have been fighting at all. Not one of the Stuarts did as much harm to the country as the present Ministry. He did not charge them with want of capacity—they had capacity—but it was all exhausted in managing that House.

CHAPTER XCVII

KING'S MOUNTAIN

"The animosity between the Whigs and Tories renders their situation truly deplorable. The Whigs seem determined to extirpate the Tories, and the Tories the Whigs. Some thousands have fallen in this way, in this quarter, and the evil rages with more violence than ever. If a stop cannot be soon put to these massacres, the country will be depopulated in a few months more, as neither Whig nor Tory can live."—GENERAL GREENE.

"What was the nature of the conflict in South Carolina? Did Whigs and Tories meet in open and fair fight? Alas, no! They murdered one another . . . murder is the only word that can be employed to express the truth. . . . Nor was it only in South Carolina that deeds of shame were done. There were those among the Whig officers who served in other sections—nor were they all of inferior rank—who took life without necessity, and for the sake, apparently, of merely enjoying the death-scene of a trembling, shrieking Tory." —Sabine, *American Loyalists.*

"Major Ferguson's misfortune was one of those untoward circumstances, which, Lord Cornwallis says, occurred during the four months succeeding the battle of Camden. . . . Major Ferguson was detached to a distance from his Lordship, with a body of militia . . . under an idea that he could make them fight; notwithstanding his Lordship had informed me, some little time before, that it was contrary to the experience of the army, as well as of Major Ferguson himself. The consequence was that the Major and his whole corps were unfortunately massacred."—*Clinton's Observations on Cornwallis' Answer.*

WHEN the news of Camden reached England, it was supposed once more that the war was over. That news decided Ministers to dissolve at once—to strike while the American iron was hot. Cornwallis remained at Camden, preparing to invade North Carolina. He sent word to "our friends" to arm, and seize all the "most violent people" among the rebels, and the military stores, promising to march to their support in a few days. But the heat of the weather, and the unhealthy season, caused much sickness, and he could not move so soon. He was also waiting for supplies from Charlestown, and for waggons. Meanwhile he determined to try severity. He would show the rebels that they must not "sport with allegiance and oaths, and with the lenity and generosity of the British Government." On September 16 he issued

a Proclamation, sequestrating the estates of the openly disaffected, and appointing a Commission to take possession. Part of the annual produce was to go to maintain the rebels' families, the rest towards paying the expenses of the war. Prisoners taken with British protections in their pockets were to be hanged; so was every man who had taken arms for the British and afterwards joined the rebels. Cornwallis deported to islands many whom he thought doubtfully loyal. But in spite of all, by the end of August Sumpter was again in the field, beating up for recruits.

Now was the time for "our friends" to rise; but to Cornwallis' wrath and disgust they remained quiet. He considered that he had a right to complain of them—they had not even sent him information of Gates' approach. He had expected them to rise *en masse*, after so decisive a victory as Camden; but they did not, and he soon found that hanging was a game two could play at.

The rebels hanged poor old Colonel Mills, who was always a fair and open enemy to the rebellion. Cornwallis, remonstrating with General Smallwood on the cruelties committed by partisan bands, says he himself has only hanged those who took up arms again after receiving protection, or those who enrolled themselves in the militia, received arms and ammunition, and then watched their first opportunity of joining the enemy.

Frightful things happened in Georgia in September. A loyalist account says that on the 12th "the rebels rose in Georgia, attacked Colonel Browne in Augusta: he being very weak, was obliged to leave the town, and take shelter in a fort, where he had his stores for the Indians, but on the approach of Colonel Cruger from Ninety-Six, a body of Indians accidentally coming down, the rebels fled, and Colonel Browne sallying out, they killed and took several hundreds of them." The account goes on to say that Major Ferguson has just heard from Cruger that he has "killed a great many, *hanged* several of the inhabitants, and has a *great many more to hang*."

It was Colonel Elijah Clarke who attacked Browne in Augusta, and a letter from him gives the sequel. "After my necessary retreat to your side the mountains, a Colonel Cruger from Ninety-Six, with Browne and a body of Tories and Indians, followed us into the upper settlements of Georgia, and finding us out of their reach, fell upon our sick and wounded, together with old men, women and children of the families of those that adhered to, or retreated with me; also several Tory families, I suppose through mistake of the Indians, were all murdered in

the most cruel manner; women and children stripped, scalped, and suffered to welter in their gore unassisted, until they expired with hunger and pain; others obliged to dance naked between two large fires, until they were scorched to death; men stripped, dismembered, and scalped, afterwards hung up. It is too painful for me to dwell on this gloomy subject, *my own family being lost in the general calamity.*"[1]

Stories such as these make one sometimes wonder whether the accounts of tortures by Indians and savages are true—whether any but white men have done such deeds—for there is better evidence for the atrocities of white men than for most of those of Indians.

To keep up the spirits of his North Carolina friends, Cornwallis now sent Colonel Ferguson to harry the borders with his own corps of light infantry, and a body of militia also trained by himself. Ferguson was to take no artillery nor baggage, and had strict orders to return at once if he found a superior force. Clinton, meanwhile, was sending General Leslie to the Chesapeak with 3000 of his best troops.

Ferguson was the son of a Scots Judge—was considered to be of a conciliating disposition, and it was hoped he would win over the people. He now addressed them in a reassuring manner. "We come not to make war upon women and children, but to give them money and relieve their distresses." He was reputed the best marksman living. He had invented a rifle which discharged seven times in a minute. Had he but been acquainted with Washington's person at Germantown, that would have been his last fight—several times Ferguson observed him that day, but not knowing who he was took no particular aim at him. He was better than an Indian at wiles. Of all the officers of Cornwallis' army, the two most feared by the rebels were Patrick Ferguson and Banastre Tarleton. Tarleton was the young officer of dragoons who took General Lee. He was now six-and-twenty, rather below the middle height, square-built and muscular, swarthy in complexion, with small, black piercing eyes—altogether the very figure of a dashing dragoon. He also knew how to write, and has left a history of these events.[2]

[1] It appears, from another loyalist account, that after the affair at Augusta, "of twelve prisoners who fell into the hands of the King's troops, eleven were hang'd without trial." Of the "skirmishes with various successes," this last account says, they answer "no other end but that of depopulating and ruining the country entirely."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1781.

[2] Tarleton, in his History, blamed Cornwallis for allowing Ferguson to go. Cornwallis calls it a "most false and malicious attack"—says Tarleton did

Cornwallis soon found that the Battle of Camden was not to do him any more good than the taking of Charlestown. He was hoping to be reinforced. By September 8th, he had advanced from Camden to Charlotte, in Mecklenburgh County—the very place where Independence was first declared. It was in a wild and rugged country, fit for ambushes, and Cornwallis' expresses began to be shot down and their despatches seized. He got no news of Ferguson, who was to have met him at Charlotte.

Ferguson never came. He delayed too long in those fastnesses; and his men—many of them Tories who had joined him, and were foremost in ferocity against their Whig neighbours—had committed too many outrages. He was too secure. He thought there was no force left in the country able to "look him in the face," but he did not reckon with the fury of people brought to bay. An enemy suddenly sprang out of the ground. "The scattered inhabitants of the mountains assembled without notice or warning, under the conduct of six or seven of their militia colonels, to the number of six hundred strong, daring, well-mounted and excellent horsemen." These were the "mountain-men" of the Georgian border. Long experience in Indian warfare had taught them the art of border war—men who fought in hunting shirts, with sprigs of evergreen in their hats, and had no baggage nor baggage-waggon, and no plan of battle, but when they saw their enemy, tied their horses to the trees and plied their rifles. Presently the 600 were 3000—among them some regulars.

Ferguson learned his danger, and pushed with all speed for Charlotte, sending expresses on ahead to tell Cornwallis of his situation—but they never arrived. On the 7th of October the pursuers came in sight of King's Mountain, an insulated promontory half a mile long, with sloping sides covered with tall forest-trees. Here Ferguson had made a stand—the pursuers saw the glitter of arms on the crest of the hill. Ferguson had sworn that all the rebels out of hell should not drive him from that stronghold. The mountain-men stormed him from three sides at once. Every man was to take good aim, and fire as fast as he could—if they were hard pressed, they must get behind trees, or retreat a little, and then come on again—that was all their plan.

Ferguson rushed out with the regulars, and charged with the bayonet, driving his assailants down the mountain—for they had not a bayonet among them. But as fast as one party gave way another came on, and those that gave way always returned again.

approve; but pleaded weakness from a fever for not going to his relief. He refused to try, "though I used the most earnest entreaties."

At last Ferguson fell, and his white horse was seen rushing down the mountain without a rider. When their leader was slain the rest surrendered. One hundred and fifty of Ferguson's men were killed, and but twenty of the Americans. Eight hundred and ten were taken—of whom all but one hundred were loyalists. And now came the day of reckoning. The victors had a good deal to avenge, and they avenged it. A court-martial was held next day at Gilbert Town, and many of the most obnoxious of the Tories were hanged. Then the victors went home with the 1500 stand of arms they had taken.[1]

The effect of this small engagement was prodigious—it stayed the invasion of North Carolina. There was a quarrel between Cornwallis and Tarleton—each accusing the other of having recommended Ferguson's expedition—and Tarleton had pleaded illness when he was to be sent to relieve Ferguson.

All that Cornwallis got by his hangings was that nobody ever asked for any more passes. He sent word to Gates that he should retaliate for those hanged at Gilbert Town, and he ordered the Indians to be encouraged to attack the settlements. This drew off the rebel bands, as they went home to repel the Indians. But already Cornwallis was sick of it. His was a kindly and honourable nature—he saw himself turned into a hangman. He thought of resigning. There was a coldness (to say the least of it) between himself and Clinton—Clinton saw in Cornwallis Germaine's pet, while he himself was Germaine's scapegoat, on whom the blame for any failure would be laid. But really believing that Carolina was "settled," he was suggesting that Cornwallis should move to the Chesapeak, where Leslie could co-operate with him.

So entirely did the whole scene change, that in a week after the disaster of King's Mountain Cornwallis saw that he must look to the safety of South Carolina, instead of prosecuting the invasion of North. On the 14th of October he began a hasty retreat towards Wynnesborough, on the frontier of the two Carolinas, there to await Leslie and the reinforcements. Some letters written by Lord Rawdon for Cornwallis—then laid up with fever—shed the clearest light on the true state of things. Writing to Leslie on October 24, from "the Camp west of Catawba," Rawdon says, "The appearance of General Gates' army unveiled

[1] Ferocity was not confined to the South. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for January, 1781, says: "On the back settlements, parties under Sir W. Johnson, and others, from Quebec, have almost depopulated the country near the Lakes, having burnt 300 houses, and carried off 600 horses, besides a number of horned cattle."

to us a fund of disaffection of which we could have formed no idea."

Even the dispersion of that army after Camden had not extinguished the ferment. On the 29th Rawdon writes to Clinton (from "between the Catawba and Broad Rivers") that the loyalists of North Carolina, who were so impatient to rise, that we had to beg them to keep quiet until the new crops enabled us to join them, by providing sustenance for the army, now do not stir, though we have sent repeated messages to tell them that the hour has come. "Not a man has improved the moment." They do not even send us information. During "the long wait at Charlotteburg," for the stores and convalescents, we had no intelligence about the force collecting against us. The dreadful news of Ferguson was slow in coming. When the army crossed the Catawba, it had heard no news for three weeks—all the expresses from Camden had been waylaid, and some murdered. The first thing we knew was that the posts were taken. And now Georgetown is taken, and all to eastward of the Santee is disaffected; and Cruger sends word that the whole district of Ninety-Six means to submit to the rebels as soon as they come. Also our troops are exceedingly fatigued, and so weakened by sickness that Lord Cornwallis dares not make any detachment.

Tarleton, meanwhile, was fighting savage little actions, after every one of which the situation grew worse, and the "friends of government" fewer. The conflict degenerated into mere murder. Tarleton burned all the corn from Camden to Nelson's Ferry. He so far forgot himself as to strike the widow of a General officer, because she could not tell him the whereabouts of Marion, another very active partisan leader. Tarleton burned her house, and did not leave her even a change of linen. The line of his march was marked by groups of houseless women and children, sitting round fires in the open air of winter.

Next, Tarleton turned his attention to Marion—the "Swamp Fox," who was always cutting the communications with Charlestown. Tarleton almost caught him once, but was recalled by Cornwallis, to march against Clarke and Sumpter, who were threatening the district of Ninety-Six. On the 20th of November Tarleton overtook them in a strong position at Black Stocks Hill by Tyger River. He attacked with his cavalry, without waiting for the infantry to come up—Sumpter's force was thus nearly double his own, and Tarleton was repulsed with loss; but Clarke and Sumpter were badly wounded—it was said mortally—and Sumpter was so long recovering that his force dispersed. One stormy night in

November, as Cornwallis lay awake at Wynnesborough, listening to the gale, he thought how good it was that Sumpter and Clarke would fight no more.

Cornwallis was at Wynnesborough by November 12, and recovered from his illness. He saw that he must give up North Carolina. "This province," he wrote to Leslie, "is most exceedingly disaffected." There had been another disastrous little victory. Major Wemys had thought he could surprise Sumpter, and did so, riding into his camp at midnight at the head of forty of Tarleton's dragoons, while Sumpter's men were sleeping round their fires. But the rebels rallied from their first alarm, and with their first fire wounded Wemys in several places, and threw the cavalry into disorder; and though about seventy of them were killed or wounded, "the Enemy cried Victory, and the whole country came in fast to join Sumpter."[1] But after this came the affair of Black Stocks, and Cornwallis hoped he had seen the last of Sumpter.

He had asked for Leslie and the reinforcement from Virginia, to co-operate with him at Cape Fear River. Leslie was waiting in Hampton Roads, on board the *Romulus*. He reached Charlestown on the 29th December, having already seen Cornwallis at Wynnesborough on his way, and arranged to join him about seventy miles from Camden.

Congress had at last made up its mind to enquire into the defeat at Camden. Washington was asked to appoint a General *ad interim*. He named Greene, but wrote Gates a letter assuring him of his own undiminished confidence, and trying in every way to comfort him, till the poor General said he had felt more pleasure in reading it than he ever thought to feel again.

Greene arrived at Charlotte on December 2. The enquiry was to have been held then and there; but with great delicacy Greene decided that there were not General officers enough in camp, and that the state of General Gates' feelings (he had just lost his only son) made him unfit to enter on his defence. Greene added that the defeat was a case of misfortune, and that the most honourable course was to obtain a revision of the order for enquiry. Gates was persuaded to acquiesce in this delay, but he declined to serve until the matter had been investigated, and retired to his estate in Virginia. The General Assembly of Virginia also showed great delicacy and generosity to Gates.

Greene found about 2300 men at Charlotte—the greater part

[1] Cornwallis to Clinton, December 3, 1780.

militia. They were disheartened by defeat, their officers had grown negligent, the troops disorderly. Their pay was months in arrear, they had no tents, were badly fed and clothed, and had been driven to preying on the inhabitants. The country was difficult. Whigs and Tories were always out in small parties, and the "middle country" was strongly Tory. The first thing Greene had to do was to reorganise the army.

Nor was Cornwallis much better off. Early in January Leslie's men joined him, but he found most of them "exceedingly bad"—the exceptions were the Guards and the "Bose regiment," a German corps. After Leslie arrived, however, Cornwallis had a larger army than any commander in America. But the nature of the country made military operations extremely difficult, and sometimes impossible. In winter the rivers and creeks were impassable; in summer even the natives could hardly bear the great heats. Then there were perpetual incursions of refugees, and as perpetual rebel risings. And he had hardly any money to pay his troops—there was in fact very little money in the province at all.

It added to his embarrassment that a letter was going the round of the papers—a letter from Rawdon to Major Rugeley, of the Mills, a loyalist. It was found in Rugeley's house, when he fled on the approach of Gates, and was dated from Camden, July 7. It was hardly the letter of a commander who feels himself in force to meet the enemy in fair fight. It urged Rugeley to try to corrupt certain officers then with Sumpter—their names were given. He was to get them to advise Sumpter to advance and fix his encampment "behind Berkley's Creek, where there is a very spacious position. I will promise *five hundred guineas* to any of them who will prevail upon him to take that step; will give you notice of it; will particularize the enemy's force, and mark what detachments are made to secure their camp from surprise." "Very plausible arguments may be used" for counselling Sumpter—he may be told he will cover the "Wahaws" from our cavalry, and secure the grain of that district. It would be well to spread false reports of "disasters to M'Arthur." There is a Colonel Lacey, "a prisoner on parole to us," who was injuriously treated and confined by Sumpter (for trying to persuade a brother-officer to follow his example and give his parole)—he may be "a good channel for the business." Even if Sumpter learned the proposal, and laid an ambuscade, "I might probably draw as much advantage from meeting him in that manner as if I had been the assailant."

Rawdon's chief fear seems to be lest the person whom we try to corrupt should go halves with Sumpter, and "so entitle him to the reward." Sumpter may encamp at Berkley's Creek one afternoon, to go off next morning. The terms "must be *bona-fide*, towards us, at least."

Wynnesborough was healthy, and well situated to protect the greatest part of the northern frontier, and support Rawdon at Camden. Cornwallis' plan for the winter now was to penetrate at once into North Carolina, leaving the defence of South Carolina to Rawdon. About the middle of January he began offensive operations. He resolved to take the upper roads, hoping thus to drive Morgan out of South Carolina, and by rapid marches get between Greene and Virginia, and fight him before he could be reinforced. Surely "the friends of government" will rise then!

Tarleton never caught Marion; but Morgan caught Tarleton at the Cowpens. Greene, with one division of his army, was now on the east side of the Pedee in North Carolina, and had detached his other division, 1000 strong, under Morgan, to a position near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad Rivers, not far from Ninety-Six, in South Carolina. Cornwallis was still at Wynnesborough, about 70 miles from Greene, but was just about to move; Leslie was advancing from Charlestown with 1500 of the reinforcements—the other 1500 were left to hold Charlestown. Cornwallis intended to leave Rawdon at Camden with troops enough to keep all quiet, while he himself went after Greene. But first he sent Tarleton to strike a blow at Morgan, and at any rate drive him over the Broad River. Heavy rains much impeded the march, but at eight in the morning of January 17, Tarleton came up with Morgan, who was retreating before him.

Morgan's force was nearly equal in numbers to Tarleton's, but far inferior in cavalry and discipline. He had halted—intending to give Tarleton battle—at an open grazing space called Hannah's Cowpens, from the owner's name. It was in an open wood, with two eminences of unequal height, about eighty yards from each other. On these heights Morgan had posted himself. It was not a good position, for the Broad River cut off retreat; but the British were weary with an all-night march, and Morgan's men were fresh. He arrayed his force in two lines—the North and South Carolina Militia and an advanced corps of North Carolina and Georgia Riflemen in one; and as Morgan thought it highly probable that these would bolt, he

gave orders to his second line—all regulars—not to mistake the falling back of the first for a retreat. His 80 cavalry, under the redoubtable William Washington, and 50 mounted Carolinian Volunteers, were about 150 yards in the rear of this second line. It was a cunning arrangement worthy of the old backwoodsman.

Tarleton saw only the militia—drawn up on the edge of the open wood; Morgan had kept his regulars out of sight. Tarleton came on—so confident that he hardly waited to form a line of battle. He rushed forward with the North Carolina loyalists and the Georgia riflemen. As he too expected, the rebel militia broke and ran. But the British broke too in pursuing, and suddenly Morgan's men faced about and gave the pursuers a heavy fire. It was so unexpected that the whole British line was thrown into confusion. Washington's dragoons charged, the cannon and colours were taken. Tarleton tried in vain to rally his legion, which he had kept as a reserve—the panic spread even to them—the legion turned tail and galloped off into the woods, over the flying infantry. Tarleton says that he assembled 50 of his cavalry and charged, and repulsed Colonel Washington's Horse, but Morgan's light infantry came up, and only the speed of his horse saved Tarleton from capture. Ten officers and 100 men were killed on the British side, and 200 wounded, and between 500 and 600 taken prisoners. The American loss was 12 killed and 60 wounded. Cornwallis, who had moved on the 7th, was encamped at Turkey Creek, waiting for Leslie, when towards evening of the 17th some of the dragoons straggled in with the bad news. Next morning Tarleton himself arrived.

It was the most serious defeat since Saratoga (says Cornwallis' biographer). The loss in cavalry crippled his movements ever after. In the letter he wrote to Clinton next day—lest "exaggerated reports" should reach him—Cornwallis says one can never know how many the rebel militia will be for three days following, and Morgan had been lately joined by some.

NOTE ON THE AMERICAN LOYALISTS IN ARMS.

Sabine says that there must have been 20,000 of them, on the lowest computation, and, judging from the numbers of their killed and wounded, probably many more. Thus in four actions of Colonel W. Washington, Sumpter, Marion, and Lee, the aggregate of killed, wounded and prisoners "was upwards of 2300—more than a ninth part of my estimate." "There were certainly twenty-nine or thirty regiments or battalions, regularly organised, officered, and paid."

The King's Rangers.
The Royal Fencible Americans.
The Queen's Rangers.
The New York Volunteers.
The King's American Regiment.
The Prince of Wales' American Volunteers.
The Maryland Loyalists.
De Lancey's Battalions.
The Second American Regiment.
The King's Rangers, Carolina.
The South Carolina Royalists.
The North Carolina Highland Regiment.
The King's American Dragoons.
The Loyal American Regiment.
The American Legion.
The New Jersey Volunteers.
The British Legion.
The Loyal Foresters.
The Orange Rangers.
The Pennsylvania Loyalists.
The Guides and Pioneers.
The North Carolina Volunteers.
The Georgia Loyalists.
The West Chester Volunteers.

These Corps were all commanded by Colonels or Lieut.-Colonels, and as de Lancey's Battalions and the New Jersey Volunteers consisted each of three battalions, this list makes 28. To these must be added The Newport Associates, The Loyal New Englanders, The Associated Loyalists, and Wentworth's Volunteers. Besides these, Colonel Archibald Hamilton of New York commanded at one period 17 Companies of Loyal Militia. "To these we must add the predatory bands, which in some sections were almost innumerable, during some periods . . . and those that entered the naval service, those who enlisted in privateers, and those who in the Carolinas carried on the exterminating warfare described by General Greene."—*The American Loyalists.*

CHAPTER XCVIII

THE BATTLE OF GUILDFORD COURT HOUSE

"I attacked him (Greene) on the 15th, and, after a very sharp action, routed his army, and took his cannon. The great fatigue of the troops, the number of the wounded, and the want of provisions, prevented our pursuing them beyond the Reedy Fork."—*Cornwallis to Rawdon*, Camp at Guildford, March 17, 1781.

"The unexpected failure of our friends rendered the victory of Guildford of little value . . . every man in the army must have been convinced, that the accounts of our emissaries had greatly exaggerated the numbers of those who professed friendship for us . . . a very inconsiderable part of them could be prevailed upon to remain with us, or to exert themselves in any form whatever." —*Cornwallis's Answer.*

"Your Lord[p] ordered them to rise after Campden, they did so, you marched to supp[t] them. Ferguson's defeat obliged you to retrograde and leave them to be massacred; you afterwards made a desultory move instead of a solid one to support them, and when you wanted them to join you, you had not 700 men to support them; no arms to give them, not 2 days provision in your army, and actually in retreat when you called them !!!"—*Clinton's Note.*

THE thing now was to pursue, and if possible recover the prisoners. Cornwallis spent the 18th in forming the junction with Leslie, in collecting the remains of Tarleton's corps, and in destroying a good deal of his baggage, to lighten his march. Then he set out after Morgan. It was a race. Morgan crossed the Catawba two hours before Cornwallis came up. He could not now be prevented from joining Greene. Cornwallis assembled his army on January 25 on the South Fork of the Catawba, and as Tarleton's mishap had deprived him of his light troops, he was obliged to make his whole force active. He halted for two days, to collect flour and destroy more superfluous baggage, and all the waggons, except those laden with hospital stores, salt, and ammunition—with four empty spare ones reserved for sick and wounded. And though he destroyed a great deal of officers' baggage, "and all prospect in future of rum, and even a regular supply of provisions to the soldiers, I must, in justice to the army, say, that there was the most general and chearful acquiescence." Indeed, the best feature of this miserable war is the good discipline which some of the most unfortunate com-

manders were able to maintain. Here was shown the immense superiority of disciplined over undisciplined troops.

Meanwhile rains had made the North Catawba impassable, and Morgan's corps, the militia of the "rebellious counties" under Davidson, and "the gang of plunderers under Colonel Sumpter" (who unhappily was recovered of his wounds), had occupied all the fords for more than forty miles above the Forks. Cornwallis approached the river by short marches, so as to give the enemy "equal apprehensions" for several fords, but resolved to try the passage of a "private ford," near M'Cowan's Ford, which was only slightly guarded.

On the morning of February 1st Lieut.-Colonel Webster was sent with part of the army and all the baggage to Beattie's Ford, six miles higher than M'Cowan's—where Davidson was supposed to be posted with 500 militia. He was to make every appearance of intending to force a passage, while the rest of the army, with two 3-pounders, marched in the night to the ford really intended. The morning was dark and rainy, the way was through a wood; one of the 3-pounders overset, and the other had to be left behind, but the head of the column arrived at the river's bank as day began to break. It was at once evident there would be more opposition than had been expected. Time was precious—the river was rising, Morgan's and Greene's armies were approaching. Cornwallis ordered Brigadier O'Hara and the Guards to march on, but not to fire till they were over. They crossed the Ford—more than 500 yards wide—under a constant fire; they were in many places up to their middles, on a rocky bottom in a strong current, but they reserved their fire as ordered, and the light infantry, landing first, formed immediately, "and in a few minutes killed or dispersed everything that appeared before them." The rest crossed without opposition. Davidson and two or three of his officers were found among the slain. Cornwallis had only three killed and thirty-six wounded. Tarleton, with the cavalry, was instantly sent in pursuit, some of the rebels were slain, and a few taken. The whole army assembled after dark that night six miles from Beattie's Ford.

All this while Morgan was marching on Salisbury. Cornwallis pursued, came up with his rear on the 3rd, and routed it, but only took a few waggons. Morgan passed his infantry over the river in "flats," and his cavalry by the ford. Cornwallis, trying to follow him by "the upper ford," was delayed two days by excessive rains, and during that time heard that Greene was making forced marches to join Morgan at Guildford. Cornwallis knew that

Greene expected reinforcements from Virginia, but at this moment his intelligence broke down. While he was hoping that Morgan would not be able to collect "flats"—as his spies had assured him—Morgan had already crossed, broken all the bridges, secured the flats. He had also destroyed the roads. Cornwallis abandoned the pursuit, and went by easy marches to Hillsborough, where he set up the King's standard, and issued a Proclamation inviting all loyal subjects to repair to him.[1] At the same time he sent Tarleton to prevent their being "interrupted" in assembling. Unluckily a detachment of rebel light troops had crossed the river the same day, and by accident "fell in with about 200 of our friends under Col. Pyle, most of whom were inhumanly butchered when begging for quarter, without making the least resistance." The same day Cornwallis received certain intelligence that Greene had been reinforced, and had recrossed the Dan. Again he sent Tarleton forward, to move with precaution, "and discover his designs." Tarleton had not gone far when he fell in with a considerable corps, which he routed. "Our situation," says Cornwallis, "had been for some days amongst timid friends, and adjoining to inveterate rebels"; and between them he had been entirely destitute of information, and so had lost a very favourable opportunity of attacking the enemy. Greene had fallen back, and Cornwallis heard he was posted carelessly at separate plantations, but an attempt to attack him was disconcerted by Greene's suddenly retreating over the Haw. Knowing more reinforcements were coming for Greene, Cornwallis now thought it better to wait, and "give time to our friends to join us." Meanwhile he approached the communication with the shipping in Cape Fear River; for the army was suffering from want of supplies. He was very anxious for a victory, to convince "our friends" of the superiority of our arms. While a doubt of that remained, he was now persuaded the "numerous loyalists of North Carolina" would not come out. It must be admitted that "our friends" were rather wanting in spirit. But they had had some dreadful lessons.

On the 25th of February Greene suddenly re-entered South

[1] "Whereas it has pleased the Divine Providence to prosper the operations of his Majesty's arms . . . and whereas it is his Majesty's most gracious wish to rescue his faithful and loyal subjects from the cruel tyranny under which they have groaned for several years, I have thought proper . . . to invite all such faithful and loyal subjects to repair, without loss of time, with their arms, and ten days' provisions, to the Royal Standard now erected at Hillsborough."—*A Proclamation by the Right Honourable Charles Earl Cornwallis*, Hillsborough, February 20, 1781.

Carolina, and completely dispersed a large body of loyalists on the banks of the Haw. Nearly 300 were killed—most of them after surrender. Tarleton was within a mile, but for some unknown reason did not move to aid them.

Cornwallis now fell back to a position near the Forks of the Deep River. On March 14 he heard that a body of North Carolina Militia, and the expected reinforcements from Virginia—said to consist of a "Virginia state regiment, a corps of Virginia eighteen-months men, 3000 Virginia militia, and recruits for the Maryland line," had joined Greene, and that the whole rebel army, 10,000 strong, was marching to attack him. In the afternoon news came that Greene was at Guildford, twelve miles off. At daybreak of the 15th Cornwallis marched to meet him, or attack him in his encampment. About four miles from Guildford, Tarleton and the advanced guard fell in with "Lee's legion, some back mountain men, and Virginia militia," and defeated them.

The rebel army was posted on a rising ground, about a mile and a half from the Court House. The prisoners taken could give no account of the disposition of Greene's forces. Cornwallis formed his battle-array—on the right, "the regiment of Bose," and the 71st, led by Leslie, and supported by the 1st Battalion of the Guards. On the left, the 23rd and 33rd, led by Webster, and supported by the Grenadiers and the 2nd Battalion of the Guards —the whole left commanded by O'Hara. The "Yagers" and light infantry of the Guards remained in the wood, on the left of the guns, and the cavalry in the road—"ready to act as circumstances might require." The action began about half-past one. Cornwallis describes it in two letters—one, his despatch to Lord George Germaine—the other, a letter to Phillips, then with Arnold in Virginia. To the American Secretary he says that Leslie—though obliged by the great extent of the enemy's line to bring up the 1st Battalion of the Guards to the right of the Bose regiment—"soon defeated everything before him." Webster, having joined Leslie's left, was no less successful in his front, when, finding the left of the 33rd was exposed to a heavy fire from the enemy's right wing, he changed his front to the left, and, supported by the Yagers and light infantry of the Guards, attacked and routed it—the Grenadiers and Guards now moving forward to occupy the ground left vacant by Webster's movement.

All the infantry being now in line, Tarleton had orders to keep his cavalry "compact," and not to charge without positive orders, or the most absolute necessity. The excessive thickness of the woods made the British bayonets of little use, and enabled the

enemy to make frequent stands, particularly on the British right, where the 1st Guards and the Bose regiment were warmly engaged in front, flank, and rear, with some of the enemy that had been routed in the first attack, and with part of Greene's left wing, which had been protected by the thickness of the wood. The 71st and the Grenadiers, with the 2nd Guards, not knowing what was happening to their right, but hearing the fire advance on their left, continued to move forward, the artillery keeping pace with them on the road, followed by the cavalry. The 2nd Battalion of Guards first gained the clear ground near Guildford Court House, and found a corps of Continental infantry, much superior in number, formed in the open field.[1] "Glowing with impatience to signalize themselves," they instantly attacked and defeated them, taking two 6-pounders. But, pursuing into the wood with too much ardour, they were thrown into confusion by a heavy fire, and were immediately charged and driven back into the field by Colonel Washington's dragoons, and the guns were retaken. But the enemy's cavalry was soon repulsed by a well-directed fire from two 3-pounders just brought up by Lieutenant Macleod, and by the appearance of the Grenadiers, of the Guards, and of the 71st Regiment, which, having been impeded by some deep ravines, were now coming out of the wood opposite the Court House. O'Hara, though wounded, soon rallied the 2nd Battalion, and they returned to the charge "with the greatest alacrity." The 23rd came up from the left, Tarleton advanced with the cavalry, and the enemy was soon put to flight; the two 6-pounders were again captured, together with two ammunition waggons, and two other 6-pounders—all the artillery Greene had in the field. The 23rd and 71st were ordered to pursue, the militia on the right dispersed in the woods, the Continentals "went off by Reedy Fork," beyond which Cornwallis could not follow them, as their cavalry had suffered little—a statement which hardly accords with what is said above of the "well-directed fire." He adds that his troops were "excessively fatigued by an action which lasted an hour and a half"; and that his "numerous" wounded were dispersed over an extensive space of country, and required immediate attention. This, and the "total want of provisions in an exhausted country," made it impossible for him to follow up the blow next day. "The enemy did not stop until they got to the iron works on Troublesome Creek, 18 miles from the field of battle."

From his "own observation, and the best accounts we could

[1] Cornwallis says the rebel militia formed the line with parties advanced to the rails of the fields in their front.

procure," he did not doubt that the strength of the enemy exceeded 7000. Between two and three hundred of the enemy were left dead on the field, but many of their wounded escaped. Cornwallis was told by his cattle-drivers that the houses "in a circle of six or eight miles" were full of wounded. He took few prisoners, owing to the thickness of the woods. Captain Schutz was mortally wounded, but the surgeons thought Webster, and several other officers, would recover. Cornwallis did not mention that he himself was slightly wounded, and that he had had two horses killed under him.

This was the account read in England—the account on which the House of Commons voted not to stop the war. But if they had seen Cornwallis' letter to Phillips, the stoutest supporter of Administration would have felt his heart misgive him. To Phillips, Cornwallis wrote from Wilmington, on April 10th, that he had had a most difficult and dangerous campaign, and had had to fight a battle 200 miles from his communications with an enemy seven times his number. "The fate of it was long doubtful. We had not a regiment or corps that did not at some time give way; it ended however happily, in our completely routing the enemy and taking their cannon. The idea of our friends rising in any number and to any purpose totally failed, as I expected." He adds, "Now, my dear friend, what is our plan? Without one we cannot succeed, and I assure you that I am quite tired of marching about the country in quest of adventures. If we mean an offensive war in America, we must abandon New York, and bring our whole force into Virginia. . . . If our plan is defensive, mixed with desultory expeditions, let us quit the Carolinas, and stick to our salt pork at New York, sending now and then a detachment to steal tobacco."

But even the conclusion of his despatch to Germaine suffices to show how little he had gained by his victory. "This part of the country," he writes, "is so totally destitute of subsistence, that forage is not nearer than nine miles, and the soldiers have been two days without bread. I shall therefore leave about 70 of the worst cases at New Garden Quaker Meeting House, with proper assistance, and move the remainder to-morrow morning, to Bell's Mill. I hope our friends will heartily take part with us, to which I shall continue to encourage them, still approaching our shipping by easy marches." Thus, instead of his victory opening to him the way to Virginia, he was about to fall back again on his base! He left Guildford on the 18th, reached Bell's Mill next day, rested there two days, and marched on slowly towards Cross Creek—sometimes called the Haw—a branch of Cape Fear River. Here

there was a settlement of Scots Highlanders, whom he had been led to believe staunch loyalists. He thought Cross Creek would be "a proper place to refresh and refit the troops"—but when he arrived, he found it "totally impossible"—provisions scarce, not four days' forage within twenty miles, and the navigation of Cape Fear River to Wilmington impracticable.

Greene, meanwhile, after resting two days at Troublesome Creek, set out after Cornwallis, hoping to bring him to action again. In a letter to Washington, Greene says he has not had his clothes off since he left the Pedee. Excessive fatigue and constant watching had brought on "a fainting," but he was better. He had little prospect of acquiring much reputation while he laboured under so many disadvantages—not the least of which was (though Greene does not say so) that the militia generally ran. And now the singular spectacle was presented of the victor retreating by circuitous ways for 200 miles, while the vanquished followed him up close, offering battle in vain. But Cornwallis could not fight. One fourth of his little army had been put *hors de combat* by his victory at Guildford.[1] Webster, and several other officers, at first expected to recover, were dead—two of them were of the Bose regiment, which evidently suffered severely. The roads were deep and clayey, provisions were scarce. The march was hurried. By the 28th, when Greene reached Ramsay's Mills on Deep River, he found several unburied bodies of wounded who had died on the march. Even quarters of beef had been left behind, and were seized on by Greene's hungry soldiers. But Cornwallis had escaped—he had broken down the bridges, and Greene's men were too exhausted to follow him over Deep River. The term of some of them was up, and they wanted to go home. So on the 7th of April Cornwallis reached Wilmington on Cape Fear River, at the south-east corner of North Carolina—the only place in the whole Province now in possession of the British—and began to urge Clinton to make the Chesapeak the seat of war, even if he gave up New York to do it!

Meanwhile, Rawdon at Camden was left to his fate, and Cornwallis found it impossible even to communicate with him. Rawdon's last letter had said that the upper posts in South Carolina were in imminent danger, "from a most alarming spirit of revolt among the people," and that Greene was again on the move. Cornwallis was extremely anxious—Rawdon had only about 800 British and Provincials with him. To go back to help him was out of the question. The day after Cornwallis received this news, he

[1] He had lost at Guildford 93 killed, 413 wounded, and 26 missing.

wrote to Clinton, "Neither my cavalry nor infantry are ready to move. The former are in want of everything; the latter of every necessary but shoes." He was thinking seriously of attempting to march into Virginia—where Phillips and Arnold seemed to be carrying all before them. He had even sent Tarleton and Hamilton with a small body of horse to "feel the way" to Petersburgh. But almost every letter between him and Phillips had been intercepted, and he knew that if he missed the junction with Phillips he was lost.

Rawdon was as much cut off as Cornwallis—the first he knew of what had happened since Guildford was by a letter from Cornwallis,[1] to tell him Greene was marching upon him, and he must abandon Camden, and retire behind the Santee.

There was no time to do it before, on the 19th of April, Greene appeared before Camden, with 1500 Continentals, and several corps of militia. He hovered about, changing his position day by day. Finally he took up a post at Hobkirk's Hill, two miles from Camden. He was believed to be waiting for Sumpter, Marion, and Lee to join him. Rawdon now saw that his only chance was to fight Greene before they came. He waited till Greene had sent off a detachment to bring up his baggage and provisions; then he armed everybody—even the drummers and the band—and on the 25th he marched out boldly and attacked Greene in his camp at ten in the morning. It was almost a surprise. Greene was worsted, but he saved his guns this time, and was soon ready to fight again. Cornwallis wrote to Rawdon that it was "a glorious victory, by far the most splendid of the war." Having gained it, Rawdon prepared to retreat—for, as a result of his victory, South Carolina rose in arms behind him. He burned most of his baggage and stores, and even the effects belonging to the inhabitants; he set fire to the prison, the mill, and left the town little more than a heap of ruins. Leaving his wounded, he crossed the Wateree at Camden Ferry, on the night of the 10th of May, having received a small reinforcement the same day, and the news that one post after another was being taken by the rebels. On his retreat he got absolutely no intelligence for five days—not one single person coming to his camp. As he was passing over Nelson's Ferry on the 13th, Balfour came up from Charlestown to tell him that the revolt was universal—the country was swarming with mounted rebel militia, and Greene was coming along the Orangeburg in force. Ninety-Six was in

[1] Cornwallis to Clinton, Wilmington, April 23, 1781.

great danger, but it was too late to think of saving forts, the country is wasted, an army cannot subsist, and Greene is much superior in numbers. Rawdon sent orders to Colonel Cruger, commanding at Ninety-Six, to abandon it at once, and remove the garrison and go to Savannah, the nearest port in Georgia. Not till he got to Monk's Corner did he know that it was not Greene but Sumpter at Orangeburg. Greene was besieging a fortress on the Congaree. None of Rawdon's messengers to Cruger reached him, and on May 22 Greene sat down before Ninety-Six. The garrison made a gallant resistance, but they were not provisioned for a siege. On the 3rd of June three regiments from Ireland arrived at Charlestown for Cornwallis, but Rawdon used two of them to try to relieve Ninety-Six—the third had to be sent by sea, at great hazard, to reinforce Sir James Wright at Savannah. Georgia, too, was in imminent danger.

Rawdon marched from Charlestown on the 7th, with 1700 men, horse and foot, and was joined on the way by the troops he had left at Monk's Corner. He pressed on, in hot weather, much harassed by the rebels, till a spirited charge got rid of them. As he went, he heard that Augusta was taken, that the forces there had joined Greene, and that Greene meant to fight rather than raise the siege of Ninety-Six. Luckily Rawdon's march prevented Sumpter from joining Greene, most of whose force was only militia. Greene was sapping the principal redoubt when he heard that Rawdon was near. He resolved to assault, and did so before day on the 19th. Great gallantry was shown on both sides, but the assault was costing many lives, and Greene called his men off soon after daylight. He had prepared for this contingency, and had already sent his heavy baggage over the Saluda. He now crossed with his whole force, and halted sixteen miles off. Rawdon arrived two days after the siege was raised, and hearing Greene was at Bush River, he too crossed the Saluda next night, in pursuit, having left every kind of impedimenta behind at Ninety-Six. But Greene was too wary to be surprised again. He retreated, crossing and recrossing the Enoree, till Rawdon's troops were so spent they could go no farther.

Then Rawdon returned and destroyed the works of Ninety-Six, previous to abandoning it—for it was impossible to hold it. He left Cruger to bring away all the principal loyalists and their families, and started again in pursuit of Greene. But he was disappointed of reinforcements he had expected, and never received the letters telling him they could not come, and Greene very nearly caught him on the 1st of July at the Congarees. Forty of his

dragoons were taken with their horses without a blow. And now he was less able than ever to get intelligence.

Ill in body, and despairing of success, he requested to go home, embarked for England in the *Queen Charlotte*, and was captured at sea by de Grasse. By that time Cornwallis' own catastrophe was close at hand.

CHAPTER XCIX

THE SIEGE OF GIBRALTAR: NAVAL ACTIONS OF 1781

". . . the Town and Castle of Gibraltar, which, if possessed and made tenable by us, it would be an advantage to our trade, and an annoyance to the Spaniard; and enable us, without keeping so great a Fleet on that coast, with six nimble frigates lodged there to do the Spaniard more harm than by a fleet, and ease our own charge."—*The Lord Protector to Generals Blake and Montague, at sea,* April 28, 1656.

"When our troops entered the batteries, the written report of the commanding officer was found in one of the splinter-proofs, which, when the guard was relieved, was intended to have been sent to the Spanish general. The report expressed that '*Nothing extraordinary had happened.*'"—Drinkwater, *Account of the Sortie.*

ALL this while Eliott had been stoutly defending Gibraltar.

By the end of 1779 the garrison were anxiously looking for relief. Early on the morning of the 10th of January, 1780, a squadron was seen to the east—supposed to be d'Estaing's from the West Indies. The same day a soldier was hanged for stealing —the first execution since Eliott was Governor. On the 12th the batteries of St. Philip began to fire, and the townspeople removed from the town. A woman was slightly wounded—the first person struck in the siege. That evening the Governor told his officers he must shorten the weekly allowance of provisions. The men took this with admirable obedience. But relief was near—next day Admiral Duff ordered all the armed vessels to be ready, "*in case a convoy was near.*" Two days afterwards, a brig, which seemed to be going through to the east, suddenly altered her course, and in spite of the enemy anchored under the walls. It was long since a ship with the British flag had entered the bay—the whole garrison assembled to southward to welcome her in. She told them she was one of a large convoy come to relieve them. "The distressed Jews and other inhabitants were frantic with joy." But the garrison were very uneasy—the brig had parted company with the convoy in the Bay of Biscay, and off Cadiz had seen

"9 great sail of the line," which seemed to be there to stop the way. But on the evening of the 16th a deserter brought the joyful news that on the 8th Admiral Rodney had taken 6 Spanish men-of-war and 15 merchantmen off the coast of Portugal, and was coming to relieve Gibraltar with 21 sail of the line. Next they heard that Rodney was engaged with a Spanish squadron off Cape St. Mary. And late that night one or two of the convoy got in (amidst the flashing of lightning)—and brought word that Rodney had taken the Spanish Admiral.

On the 20th Rodney anchored in the bay. He had got Admiral Langara on board. By the 12th of February he had landed all the stores, and on the 13th he sailed away again.

Four dreary months went by. Even before Rodney came the scurvy had appeared. It now became general, from the bad salt cod and the lack of vegetables. And now came alarms of fire-ships, and in June an actual attack, which failed.

By August, 1780, provisions had begun to be "extremely offensive." By the end of August they found that the Moors were allowing the Spaniards to capture every vessel which took refuge under their guns. Their "domestic market" was thus cut off, and they were soon in worse distress than before Rodney relieved them. But one day in October a Dane from Malaga got in with a cargo of oranges and lemons. Eliott bought up the cargo, and distributed the fruit among his garrison—eaten up with scurvy, but heroically struggling to remain on duty. The oranges and lemons worked like a miracle—in a few days even the supposed hopeless cases had crawled out of bed, and were talking of returning to duty.[1]

The garrison had long been complaining that Consul Logie never did anything for them. On January 11, 1781, they learned the reason. A Spanish flag of truce, and two Moorish galleys, brought over Logie and all the British residents in Barbary.

[1] "Mr. Cairncross of the 73rd regiment, a surgeon of great eminence," present at the Siege, tried various anti-scorbutics—"acid of vitriol, sour crout, extract of malt, essence of spruce, etc.," but only fresh oranges and lemons did much good—or their preserved juice, when fresh fruit could not be got. He gave them from one to four ounces of this per diem, as they could bear it. "Whilst the lemons were sound," from one to three a day. Those "in the most malignant state, sometimes took it diluted with sugar, wine or spirits," but convalescents took it pure. The scurvy became general at the beginning of winter, owing to the cold and damp, and at the beginning of spring, when vegetables were scarce.

With a great bribe the Spaniards had induced "the Emperor of Morocco" to banish them. So the garrison had lost their good friends the Moors. They watched more eagerly than ever for the boats from Minorca, which crept along the Spanish coast, and lay-to, waiting for night to slip into port—that last moment the most critical. If they were caught, it was a Spanish dungeon, and perhaps the loss of all they possessed. But the garrison paid well, and the boats risked it.

At last, in March—when "biscuit-crumbs" were 1s. a pound—the *Resolution* arrived, twenty-nine days from Plymouth, with rum, coals, and sugar, and reported that she had left Admiral Darby in Torbay, just coming to relieve Gibraltar. They were almost more glad than when they heard Rodney was coming. The salt beef and pork were almost putrid, the butter little more than rancid congealed oil—and very little of this. At midnight on the 11th a cutter brought word that Darby, with "the British grand fleet," was at the entrance of the Strait, and as the fog lifted next morning the watch at the signal-house sighted the fleet. Slowly the fog rose, disclosing the hundred vessels of the convoy, sailing in a compact body, their sails just enough filled for steerage, led by several men-of-war, while the bulk of the British fleet lay away under the Barbary shore, to be out of the way of fire-ships.

The garrison had long been warned by private letters that the Spaniards meant to bombard Gibraltar, if it were relieved a second time. At a quarter to eleven, as the van of the convoy came to anchor off the New Mole, Fort Philip opened fire on the town, followed by all the other six batteries. The miserable inhabitants, men, women, and children—their joy turned to terror—fled to the southward, leaving their goods at the mercy of the soldiers.

But the bombardment did not prevent the landing of the supplies. This took nine days, and as Darby was in haste to be gone, 1000 men of the navy helped to unlade. Meanwhile the bombardment had produced a very disagreeable result. The damage, and the fires it caused, discovered to the soldiers that many of the "hucksters" had been keeping back their stocks to raise prices. This much incensed them, and the enemy's shells having set fire to a wine-shop "near the Spanish church," there was great confusion. The soldiers got so drunk that some died of "immediate intoxication," others were recovered by "oils and tobacco-water." The hidden stores demoralised the men, discipline seemed overthrown—the threats and entreaties

of officers had no effect. Drinkwater saw a party roasting a pig by a fire of cinnamon. Eliott at first only reprimanded and imprisoned, but they broke out a second time, and he was compelled to use severer measures.

By the 15th the bombardment was terrible—a volley of eight or ten cannon was fired every instant. The British batteries were silent. The guns at Willis' were drawn behind the merlons for safety. Entirely new arrangements of the garrison had to be made. Everything was removed to the southward. There were already many casualties. On April 17 the first shot reached the Rock Gun. That afternoon the enemy's shells set fire to the stores in the Spanish church. The guns now began to do mischief to the shipping, and almost every day some position had to be shifted. The lines were choked with stones and rubbish brought down the rock by the enemy's shot. The town was nearly demolished — engineers were always at work repairing damages. When on the 20th the fleet prepared to return, many merchantmen, laden with goods much needed by the garrison, went away with their cargoes, rather than risk delivering them under fire. Darby was afraid of losing the easterly wind. That night the Victualling Office was on fire for a short time, and the town was burning in four places. But by this time it mattered little what befell a mere heap of ruins. Next day the flag-staff on the Grand Battery was so much injured that the upper part was cut off, and the colours nailed to the stump. And Eliott toiled on, every day trying some new device, and always giving the troops an extra reward for extra hazardous service. But the troops were now so disorganised that they scarcely obeyed their officers even when on duty. Eliott ordered any soldier found drunk, or asleep at his post, or marauding, to be immediately executed.

It happened that the rains were heavier than usual—torrents rushed down the face of the Rock, drenching the men—who often slept in a bed but one night in three. Terrible thunderstorms raged—as though to out-roar the thunder of the bombardment. In the town there was only here and there a wall left standing. Eliott and the Lieutenant-Governor lived in "bomb-proofs." Later, Eliott had a large tent pitched south of the Red Sands, and was there by day.

So it went on for months, each side strengthening its defences. On the 20th of July, *feux-de-joie* and salutes were fired in the enemy's lines, and two days after a boat from Portugal brought news that a fleet of seventy sail was coming from the west. The garrison saw

them pass Europa Point. It was the Duc de Crillon going to Minorca. There was now a lull in the fire. On September 12th there was another grand salute in the camp, and the garrison were sure that de Crillon had had some success. Now the cannonade began again. The fire was fierce on both sides—sometimes 700 rounds were fired in the twenty-four hours from each, until the men, grown careless with long use, would hardly get out of the way of a shell.[1] There were so many wounded, that Eliott had the sergeants taught how to use tourniquets.

The enemy were greatly extending their works, and now built a signal-tower under the Queen of Spain's Chair—the garrison soon found it was to give notice when their working-parties were going up hill. On October 4th a mutiny was discovered on board the *Speedwell* cutter. The plan was to murder the watch, cut the cable, and run away with the vessel to Algeciras, sell her there, and depart for England. Nearly half the crew were concerned. One of them (said to be a Spanish deserter) confessed on the afternoon of the very day the plot was to be carried out. That same night the enemy began a new parallel in front of San Carlos.

So it went on. Sometimes the garrison heard sounds of firing away to the west, and then their hearts beat high, for they thought it was a British fleet engaged with the enemy. And sometimes a Portuguese would slip in with fruit.

At last, on November 26, the Spanish works seemed finished. All attempts to destroy them by artillery had failed. But the besiegers had concentrated their attention on making these "stupendous works," until they had almost forgotten to defend them.

Eliott resolved on a sortie—to destroy them at close quarters. Deserters had given him a tolerable idea of the strength of the advance guards. He told no one till the evening of the 26th. Then, as soon as the gates were shut, he ordered a detachment to assemble at midnight on the Red Sands, "with devils, fire-faggots and working-implements," and, lest anything should have been forgotten, he invited everybody to make suggestions.

[1] A little after May 2nd (after Darby's departure) the fire became more regular. Drinkwater gives some curious stories of the effect of shells on the men's nerves. A lieutenant, whose leg was taken off, saw the shot coming, "but was fascinated to the spot." "This sudden arrest of the faculties was not uncommon." Drinkwater had seen several instances where men "had their senses so engaged by a shell in its descent, that, though sensible of their danger, even so far as to cry for assistance, they have been immediately fixed to the place." Yet these men so instantaneously recovered themselves when the shell fell as to remove to a safe place before the shell burst.

The total strength of the garrison was now 5952, and about 2000 went in the sortie. The force marched in three columns—on the right, Reden's and La Motte's Grenadiers, Hardenberg's regiment, and the 56th Light Infantry—all under Colonel Hugo—were to make for the end of the parallel. The centre, under Colonel Dachenhausen and Major Maxwell, was to attack the mortar batteries; and the left (Grenadiers, sailors, and Light Infantry) to march along the strand to the gun batteries. They set out as soon as the moon was down. Silent as was their march, the Spaniards discovered the right column. Part of Hardenberg's men missed their way in the dark, and found themselves in front of San Carlos Battery. They took it with a rush—the Spaniards fled, and the Hardenbergers were climbing down from the "stupendous work," when Dachenhausen's column arrived and, entering the battery, mistook the Hardenbergers for the enemy. Several were wounded before the mistake was discovered. All the works were carried, and then the fire-faggots were got ready, and presently the whole of the gigantic batteries were wrapped in smoke and flame. In an hour all was done—trains were laid to the magazines, and fired, and the assailants withdrew. Just as they reached their own lines, the chief magazine blew up with a terrific explosion, hurling vast masses of timber into the air. The enemy seemed struck with panic—they made no attempt to save the works, they did not even try to extinguish the flames. The few British killed and wounded seem to have been hit by shots directed on the town. The batteries were distant three-quarters of a mile from the garrison, and only a few hundred yards from the Spanish lines, and mounted 135 pieces of heavy artillery. On the 30th they were still burning in five places. The works seemed completely destroyed—only heaps of sand remained.

After several days of inaction, suddenly, at the beginning of December, the Spaniards seemed to recover themselves. More than 1000 men began to work at making fascines, etc. This went on all through January, till the ruins began to take shape again. Once more the long procession of mules brought fascines, till San Carlos Battery seemed nearly complete. So one after another they repaired all the others, keeping up a moderate cannonade the while, and every night they added something to their works.[1]

The eventful year of 1781 was full of naval expeditions and

[1] "Our loss since the 12th of April, when the Spanish batteries opened fire, was, killed and died of wounds, 122. Disabled, 46. Wounded, 400."—DRINKWATER.

actions at sea. The "Chronicle" of the *Gentleman's Magazine* says: "Great Britain, perhaps for the first time, must rely solely on her internal defence, as she has not above 12 ships of the line at home fit for service."[1] Then follows a list of the 12, with another list of 15 more, "fitting or repairing in the several dockyards, and will probably be fit for service before they can be manned." Among these latter is the *Cambridge*, for bringing which back with him in August Rodney was so much blamed. It will be seen that if we had not got the ships, it was almost more true that we had not got the men.

The first great business was another relief expedition for Gibraltar. On March 28 Admiral Darby sailed from Cork, "with the grand fleet of England, and the wind fair as it could blow."

With Admiral Darby sailed a squadron under George Johnstone, now Commodore, whose adventures give us some idea of what war with France and Spain meant. Ministers were always saying that the theatre of war was so vast they could not attend to everything at once. It was reported that there were commotions in Peru and other Spanish dominions in the New World, and Ministers had thought of sending Johnstone on a secret expedition to Peru, to embarrass Spain. Johnstone had a 74, a 64, and three 50's, several frigates, a bomb-vessel, and a fireship —appropriately named the "*Infernal*." He also had some sloops of war, and General Meadows (of Sta. Lucia) with three regiments of 1000 men each. Several outbound East Indiamen and store and ordnance ships were taking advantage of a convoy, and Johnstone's whole fleet with the transports was about 40 sail. At the last moment his destination was changed for the Cape of Good Hope. Holland was very much afraid of losing the Cape, and had asked France to help her keep it. France, very willing to prove herself a good ally, sent de Suffrein with five sail of the line. He sailed from Brest with de Grasse, at the end of March, and it was thought very likely the squadrons would fall in with each other.

Johnstone put into Port Praya, the harbour of St. Iago, in Cape de Verde, for water and provisions—it was a neutral port, and there was no idea of danger. The fleet lay about in the open harbour, "without much care or order." Numbers of the

[1] *Victory*, 100; *Berwick*, 74; *Diligent*, 70; *Buffalo*, 60; *Portland*, 50—all at Spithead. *Princess Amelia*, 80, and *Monarch*, 70, at Plymouth. *Asia* and *Belleisle* of 64, and *Ripon* of 60, in the Downs. *Hannibal* and *Preston*, of 50, at Chatham or the Nore.

crew were absent, watering, fishing, embarking live cattle, or "taking the recreation of the shore."[1] They were in this state between 9 and 10 o'clock on the morning of the 16th April, when the *Isis*, which happened to be outermost, saw a strange squadron running close round the narrow slip of land forming the eastern side of the harbour. It was de Suffrein! The surprise could hardly have happened at a worse moment—the decks of the ships were encumbered with water-casks and live-stock, and there was no time to clear. The Commodore himself was "absent in a boat," moving some ships which had driven too near each other. Signals were made in haste to call everybody on board. Johnstone, as he came back to his own ship (the *Romney*), called to the Indiamen—who had noticed nothing—to prepare for battle. Before eleven de Suffrein was upon them—coming round the point with his ships in a line, and running straight in among Johnstone's fleet, and firing broadsides. The *Hannibal* led the way—then came de Suffrein in the *Héros*—both 74's—and the *Artésien*, of 64, anchored astern of the *Héros*, while the *Vengeur* and *Sphynx*—both 64's—"ranged up and down, as they could, through the crowd of ships, and fired at every ship as they passed." The engagement lasted about an hour and a half. Several of the Indiamen, "recovered from their first surprise, fired with good effect on the enemy." The others "prudently put to sea." De Suffrein's extreme rashness was Johnstone's salvation. After about an hour of these close quarters, the three Frenchmen "found their situation too hot." The *Artésien* cut her cable and tried to get out. De Suffrein's ship followed. The unfortunate *Hannibal* now received all the fire. Johnstone, whose epistolary style was even more vigorous than that of his speeches, describes her as "the most miserable spectacle I ever beheld, and off she went upon the heel, her stern falling close to the broadside of the *Isis*; her masts were tottering; her yards were hanging different ways; her sails were flying about in rags; first fell the mizen-mast, next went the main-mast; and lastly the foremast and the outer end of the bowsprit tumbled in the water."[2] Thus she lay a sheer hulk. She said her colours were shot away—Johnstone said they were struck. But somehow or other she got out, joined the other ships at the mouth of Port Praya, and was towed off, and helped to rig up jury-masts. But so precipitate was the retirement of the French at last, that

[1] Fifteen hundred persons were absent from the fleet.—*Johnstone's Despatch.*

[2] Commodore Johnstone to the Earl of Hillsborough. Port Praya Road, April 30, 1781.

the *Sphynx* was nearly lost on a reef. Johnstone pursued, and tried to renew, but the damage to the *Isis*, the winds and currents, and the late time of day prevented. He, however, retook the *Hinchingbroke* East Indiaman (which had made a gallant fight), and even the *Infernal* was recovered by her own crew.

This strange—almost ridiculous—action was followed by the usual recriminations. Johnstone was much blamed for being taken by surprise, and the usual "Letter from a Bystander" declared he could have renewed. Johnstone retorted by blaming Captain Evelyn Sutton of the *Isis*, who when ordered to follow sent word he could not come out till he had repaired his rigging.[1] Considering the closeness of the action, the loss of men was very small, and no ships were carried off by the French. But if de Suffrein had not run upon his prey with such extraordinary rashness, it would have gone hard with Johnstone's convoy. Altogether it is one of the most curious actions of the British Navy.

Johnstone left Port Praya at the beginning of May, and by the middle of June was off the southern point of Africa. Here he detached Captain Pigot with three or four of the best sailors, to get information of the enemy. Pigot fell in with and took a great Dutch East Indiaman of 1200 tons burden. She was from Saldanha Bay, with stores and £40,000 in bullion, but her intelligence was more valuable still, for it appeared that de Suffrein, with his squadron, and a large body of troops, had arrived in False Bay on the 21st, and that several Dutch ships—Indiamen, homeward-bound, but afraid to proceed—were waiting at anchor in the Bay.[2]

Once more we were a little too late. If Johnstone and Meadows had arrived first, they would certainly have taken Cape Town, where there was no force to resist them. Johnstone determined to attempt the ships in Saldanha Bay. He knew the coast, and piloted himself; "running in under shore by night, and judging his distance only by the lead," he turned into the Bay early in the

[1] My answer was, "All this is no excuse for disobeying my positive orders; besides, I think his damages immaterial to a man of any resources." Sutton complains bitterly of Johnstone's "Coarse way," and abusive behaviour towards himself. See his letter in the *Rutland Papers*.

[2] "Saldanha is about 14 leagues to north of Cape Town. Table Bay being smaller and less convenient, as well as very dangerous to shipping during the winds which blow during our summer months, False Bay was often chosen by ships as a harbour. It lies at the back of a very long and narrow neck of land, running far out into the sea. The bottom of this bay is only about nine miles from Cape Town by land, but the passage by sea round the neck is long, difficult and dangerous."—*Annual Register*.

morning. He was so quick that, though the Dutch had kept their foretopsails bent, to be ready, they had hardly time to loose them, cut cable, and run on shore. Johnstone instantly manned his boats and boarded. The ships had already been set on fire by their own crews. Meadows himself helped to put the fire out, and four large ships of over 1000 tons each were saved.[1] After this, Meadows went on to the East Indies—where de Suffrein was to give us so much trouble; and Johnstone came home with his prizes.

The war with the Dutch had brought danger nearer than ever. It happened, fortunately for us, that they were as ill-prepared as ourselves, and to the astonishment of Europe they appeared to want seamen and naval stores—in both of which they were supposed to be second only to England. But our new enemy was most uncomfortably near; our naval operations were hampered by him at every turn, and Germaine sent the German troops round by Scotland, because there were two squadrons—a Dutch and a French—on the watch for them between Bremen and Dover. A squadron had to be stationed in the Downs, and another was required in the North Seas, to destroy the Dutch commerce and protect our own, and especially to cut off the Dutch from naval supplies. Admiral Sir Hyde Parker was sent to do this. He sailed from Portsmouth in June, for the North Sea, with four ships of the line, and a 50. Meanwhile the Dutch had strained every nerve to equip a force to convoy their outward-bound trade to the Baltic, and about the middle of July Admiral Zoutman and Commodore Kindsbergen sailed from the Texel with a great convoy. Their force was eight ships of the line, ten frigates, and five sloops—several of the frigates very large, and carrying heavy guns. They were joined by the *Charlestown*, an American frigate of an extraordinary construction, she being "as long and large as a ship of the line," with several hundred men on board, and thirty-six 42-pounders on deck—a prodigious weight of metal, which it was thought no ship could long withstand. She joined the Dutch, intending to get home by the north.

Admiral Sir Hyde Parker was just then returning from Elsinore, also with a great convoy. He had been joined by several frigates

[1] "At this time also a boat was seen rowing to our ship, filled with people in the Eastern garb, making humble signs of submission. They proved to be the Kings of Tarnate and Tidore, with the princes of their respective families, whom the Dutch East India Company had long confined on Isle Robid, with different malefactors, but had lately removed them from that island to Saldanha."—*Commodore Johnstone's Despatch*. Ternate and Tidore are two of the Spice Islands. Isle Robid was "a parched and desolate island, which served as a prison."—*Annual Register*.

and a ship of war, and now had six ships of the line. But the *Princess Amelia*, the largest, was "very old and weak," and only carried as much metal as a 50; and the *Buffalo*[1] was not only old, but so badly constructed that she had been discharged some years before, and used as a store-ship in America.

The fleets came in sight of each other on the Doggerbank, very early on the 5th of August. Parker was glad to find he had the wind of them, as the great number of their frigates might otherwise have endangered his convoy. He detached the convoy, with orders to keep the wind; and bore away with a general signal to chase. The Dutch formed their line on the starboard tack—they had eight ships, Parker seven, in the line. "Not a gun was fired on either side, until within the distance of half musquet shot. The *Fortitude* (the Admiral's ship) being then abreast of the Dutch Admiral, the action began, and continued with an unceasing fire for three hours and forty minutes; by this time our ships were unmanageable. I made an effort to form the line, in order to renew the action, but found it impracticable. The *Bienfaisant* had lost his main-topmast, and the *Buffalo* his foreyard; the rest of the ships were not less shattered in their masts, rigging, and sails: The enemy appeared to be in as bad a condition. Both squadrons lay-to a considerable time near each other; when the Dutch, with their convoy, bore away for the Texel: We were not in a condition to follow them." This is the chief part of the Admiral's modest account. He adds the significant words: "The enemy's force was, I believe, much superior to what their Lordships (of the Admiralty) apprehended."[2]

As in so many other sea-fights between English and Dutch, both sides claimed the victory, and neither side got anything out of it but a great many killed and wounded, and a vast expense in naval repairs. The famous *Charlestown* perhaps suffered most of all—it was at first supposed she had gone down. The rigging of the British and the hulls of the Dutch had received most damage, and the *Hollandia* sank that night—so suddenly that there was not time to save the wounded.

Two other ships were injured past repair. The seven-year-old son of Captain Macartney (of the *Princess Amelia*) was by his father's side when the Captain was killed, "and the boy's fortitude astonished the boldest seaman in the ship." And though the Prince of Orange wrote to say that it was a victory for the

[1] The *Princess Amelia* and the *Buffalo* were named among the only twelve ready for service!

[2] Admiral Parker's Despatch of August 6, 1781.

Dutch, the great convoy never went to the Baltic; and for that year the carrying-trade between the North and South of Europe, the great source of Dutch wealth, was annihilated.

It was known that Parker was angry, and great efforts were made to appease him. The King himself went in his yacht to the Nore, to receive the victorious squadron; the Admiral dined with his Majesty, and in the evening the King and the Prince of Wales went on board the *Fortitude*, and after a salute of twenty-one guns had been fired, the captains and officers had the honour of kissing his Majesty's hand in the great cabin. His Majesty also expressed his gracious intention to confer some signal mark of his royal approbation on the Admiral. But it was all of no use. Parker told his Majesty bluntly—Sandwich and a number of officers being by to hear—that "he wished him younger officers and better ships—he was grown too old for the service." And when little Mr. Midshipman Macartney was presented to the King, and his Majesty intimated his intention of providing for him, the Admiral apologised for informing his Majesty that he had already adopted him as his son. His Majesty had very seldom been so snubbed as he was by Admiral Parker that day. But Parker resented being sent to fight the Dutch with the *Buffalo* and the *Princess Amelia*. He immediately resigned his command; and all his grateful Sovereign could do for him was to appoint his son, Sir Hyde Parker the Younger—already a distinguished officer—to the command of a squadron.

"War is war." But it does not follow that all wars are equally base and degrading. It is impossible to study the wars of the eighteenth century without being struck by the different spirit in which we fought the French, the Spaniards, and the Dutch, from that in which we fought the Americans. The generous praise awarded to the French, the recognition of the valour and skill of the gallant de Grasse, in Rodney's great action of 1782, the accounts of the taking of the *César*, whose Captain fought four of our ships, and would not surrender till he was "almost torn to pieces" by our fire, and "had not a foot of canvas without a shot-hole";[1] the *Glorieux*, which did not strike till her masts, bowsprit and ensign were shot away; the admission that de Grasse "was nobly supported, even after the line was broken, and that when the *Ville de Paris* struck, only three men were left alive and unhurt on the upper deck, of whom de Grasse was one," contrasts painfully with the general tone adopted in speaking of the Americans. If they ran, they were

[1] One of our officers, in the warmth of his generous admiration, calls this captain "a God-like Frenchman."

cowards—though they might be raw levies, never bred to arms—if they stood firm, they were never more than "obstinate." It was our policy to call them rebels, and to treat them as such. We imagined we strengthened our cause by refusing to Washington the title of General, and to our unhappy prisoners the common humanity demanded by the modern law of nations for prisoners of war. There was no meanness we did not stoop to, no breach of faith we were not ready to commit—the only thing which restrained us was the fear of reprisal. By our persistent refusal to acknowledge the "rebels" as belligerents, we outwitted ourselves —one attempt at negotiation after another failed because we showed that we meant to acknowledge the authority of Congress only so far as Congress might happen to agree to our demands. We spared no pains to make the Americans understand that we did not intend to observe the usual rules of warfare between civilised nations. War in such circumstances loses every ennobling feature of an equal struggle—it becomes, always on one side, and sometimes on both, the operations of a horde of banditti.

CHAPTER C

ST. EUSTATIUS

"It is a vast capture; the whole I have seized for the King and the State, and I hope will go to the public revenue of my country. I do not look upon myself as entitled to one sixpence, nor do I desire it; my happiness is having been the instrument of my country in bringing this nest of villains to condign punishment. They deserve scourging, and they shall be scourged."—*Sir George Rodney to the Secretary of State for the Home Department*, Feb. 4, 1781.

"There is but one way of bringing them (the Americans) to reason. Make no difference between their armed and unarmed vessels, transport all that are taken across the Atlantic to Great Britain, and I will answer for it with my reputation, that they will soon be without armed or trading vessels, which will bring them to humble submission. Commerce, commerce alone, has supported them in their rebellion: cut off that resource, and it will soon subside . . . the men navigating the American armed and trading vessels dread nothing so much as their being sent prisoners across the Atlantic to Great Britain."—*Sir George Rodney to Philip Stephens, Esq.* (Sec. to the Admiralty), Barbadoes, June 29, 1781.

THAT fine old British Admiral, Sir George Brydges Rodney, was the only officer of first-rate abilities who would consent to serve under Sandwich. And good Tory as he was, he was under no illusions. He found the Spanish ships he captured were much better than his own. He well knew that "a thorough change in naval affairs was necessary, or discipline would be lost." A year after this, a little before his greatest victory, he wrote to Lady Rodney: "I suppose affairs will go on as usual, and I fear, nothing thought of till too late. I shall not be surprised if they detain the squadron they have promised shall follow me. If they do, they must stand by the consequences." Supporter of Ministers as he was, he was not looked on too favourably at the Admiralty. He was passed over again and again—even in 1778. He had the weaknesses of a sailor—was too fond of the women, and much too fond of the cards. As he did not get a command, his creditors became pressing, and for four years he lived in Paris, passed over and neglected—not even paid his due as Rear-Admiral of England. In April, 1778, when

his passport expired, and he was obliged to return—war being already virtually begun—Marshal Biron, with chivalrous kindness, prevailed on him to accept the loan of a thousand louis—for he could not leave Paris till he paid his debts. Drummonds repaid this sum the moment Rodney reached London; but in 1782, when the news came of Rodney's great victory, the infuriated populace mobbed Biron for having released the British Admiral. But if Rodney had a sailor's weaknesses, he also had his virtues — an irascible, but tender-hearted man, who with all his failings was an affectionate husband and father, and even when he was going to fight the French, remembered to send "a kiss" to his dog — "my faithful friend Loup."[1]

At last he got a command. He won victories, though his captains did not properly support him, and the state of the Navy was such, that if he had not taken those excellent Spanish ships he could not have done what he did. In September, 1780, his grateful countrymen elected him for Westminster in his absence, "without expense, and with almost the unanimous concurrence of the most opulent city in the world." (So Sandwich wrote to him.) But things did not go smoothly with him. He fell out with Arbuthnot—Arbuthnot said Rodney altered his orders, and Rodney said he could not wait five or six days for Arbuthnot's approbation. Arbuthnot sent the *Raisonnable* to England without telling Rodney, though he was to be under Rodney's orders—and Rodney wrote to tell their lordships of this "unprecedented conduct." He thought the war very foolishly conducted—it was now turned into "a war of posts," and as soon as we took a post, the holding of which might have brought the rebels to reason, we evacuated it. He thought Cornwallis' whole Southern expedition an ill-concerted measure, and found "slackness in every branch of the war." He tried to get Clinton to besiege Rhode Island, and recover the noblest harbour in America—but Clinton said it was too late. Now came the Dutch war.

Holland was not ready, either at home or in the West Indies. We have seen that the British Government had long had its eye on St. Eustatius. That barren and rocky island had come to be regarded as a free port—it was the emporium of the West Indies. The English, French, and Spanish fleets all put in there, as to a

[1] In one of his letters, he gently rebukes his daughter Jane for being so amused at something Loup did, that she forgot to note the affection he displayed in doing it.

neutral port, to buy supplies. There was nothing to be called a fort, and about fifty soldiers were all the garrison. In February, 1781, it had not recovered from the hurricane of last October. For once the Admiralty gave its orders in time. Very early notice of the war was sent to Rodney, and on the 3rd of February he appeared off St. Eustatius with General Vaughan and fifteen ships of the line, surrounded the island, and gave the Dutch Governor an hour to surrender. As Rodney said himself, "The blow was as sudden as a clap of thunder." The Governor did not know war was declared, and could hardly believe the Admiral was in earnest. Rodney seized everything. He gave the merchants no time to remove or destroy their books —ledgers, papers, keys of warehouses, he seized all. He took 150 sail "of all denominations (many of them richly loaded)" besides the Dutch frigate *Mars*—which "in a few days will cruise against the enemy as a British man-of-war." Also five other ships of war belonging to the Americans, and more than 1000 American prisoners. A Dutch convoy, valued at more than half a million sterling, had sailed about thirty-six hours before Rodney arrived. He sent Captain Reynolds, with three ships of war, in pursuit, and Reynolds took the whole thirty merchant-ships, "richly loaded." The Dutch Admiral was killed in the action.[1]

Rodney's letters from St. Eustatius are very interesting reading. They are written in such a tempest of indignation that it is a wonder he did not string up somebody. St. Eustatius had been called in the British Parliament "a nest of pirates." Rodney called it "a nest of vipers." He was delighted to think how great a blow he had struck the Dutch West India Company, and the "perfidious magistrates of Amsterdam." Even more fiercely than against Amsterdam, his anger burned against "those calling themselves British merchants, settled in the Dutch or neighbouring isles." But for their treasonable correspondence and assistance, the American war would long ago have been finished, nor could the French islands have been supported. It was from St. Eustatius, after the battle of April 17, 1780, that the French fleet was able to reach Martinique. From St. Eustatius they sent two vessels loaded with cordage and naval stores, and full of carpenters, who joined them under

[1] Lady Rodney wrote that her house was like a fair. "It is a thunderbolt to the Opposition." Very few appeared in the House of Commons. Negotiations for peace had been talked of—this will produce an effect on them.

Bermuda, and so eight ships were enabled to keep up with the fleet. "What will you say," he writes to Commissioner Laforey, "when I tell you English traitors were concerned in this scheme —that is men who once had the honour of being Englishmen, but debased and forfeited that name when they made themselves Dutch burghers?" As such they shall be treated, and their whole property confiscated. When the books were examined, Rodney found that certain London and Bermuda merchants had been in the habit of furnishing the Americans with war-like stores—they had a code in which they corresponded on this branch of their business—cannon-balls were called "fruit," and gunpowder "grain." The American Agents, Curyon and Gouvernier,[1] were the very persons through whose hands the Dutch succours were to have been conveyed to America—they were mentioned in the Treaty. The very few respectable men on the island were the sugar planters. He wrote to Lady Rodney: "This rock of only 6 miles in length and 3 in breadth, has done England more harm than all the arms of her most potent enemies, and alone supported the infamous American rebellion." He even discovered that a Mr. Doheman, of the English Factory of Lisbon, had been carrying on a treasonable correspondence with the rebels, and had supplied them in Portuguese vessels with ammunition and stores. The "rebel Congress" had appointed him their consul in Portugal, and the Port merchants in Madeira had begun to help the Americans.

Rodney himself was astonished at the extent of the booty. "It is a vast capture," he writes. "The whole I have seized for the King and the State. I do not look upon myself as entitled to one sixpence, nor do I desire it." Again he says, "The loss to Holland, France, and America is greater than can be conceived, and must distress them more than if the French islands had been taken; the capture is immense, and amounts to more than I can venture to say." He put it in another letter at more than two millions sterling. "The riches of St. Eustatius are beyond all comprehension."[2]

But though determined to act with severity, he did not wish

[1] They were sent to England as State prisoners, for treasonable correspondence with the enemy.

[2] From Admiral Rodney's letter to Mr. Akers, Agent for the prisoners of war at St. Christopher's, we learn that "in the last war" flags of truce used to be got for "thirty Johaneses," to go to other islands. They were the means of treasonable correspondence being carried on. The "last war" is, of course, the Seven Years' War.

the honour of Great Britain to be reflected on. A French agent and many French merchants resided on the island. Their persons were treated with respect, and they were allowed to go to Guadaloupe, and to take their household furniture, etc., "and their numerous household slaves." The Dutch merchants of Amsterdam were also to be allowed "cartel ships" to take them and their families and furniture to other islands. They cannot wish to stay here, "as I hope it will for ever cease from being a place of commerce." "The guilty American merchants, and the equally guilty Bermudian and British," were granted the same favour. So was the Dutch Governor (de Graaffe), though he was "the first man who insulted the British flag, by taking up the salute of a pirate and a rebel," and had been remarkably inimical to Great Britain, and a favourer of the American rebellion; he was treated with every respect due to a Governor — notwithstanding that he had "the meanness" frequently to ask leave to stay on as a private person where he had commanded in chief. Rodney felt this to be "truly contemptible," and refused his petition.[1] But there was to be little to stay for. Rodney had resolved even to unroof the warehouses in the Lower Town—a range of storehouses about a mile and a quarter long—and send the materials to the "poor ruined people" of Sta. Lucia. These warehouses used to let at the incredible sum of £1,200,000 a year; the greatest part of the inhabitants have now quitted it — if the buildings are left standing, it will be an inducement to the enemy to retake the island, and encourage people to settle, and carry on as before. Almost everybody seems to have had to go. The Jews fared the worst of all—they were separated from their families and locked up, and in some instances their garments were ripped up to discover hidden gold. The sugar planters alone had no share in "the pernicious commerce" which proved so detrimental to Great Britain, "and have been treated with the respect due to them."

Such is Rodney's own account of the transaction. He says that the English merchants of St. Christopher and Antigua were equally guilty, and now hate him as much as they before applauded. He remained three months at St. Eustatius[2]—a delay which he afterwards justified by saying that if he had not stayed, "every villainy would have been practised, and by persons who call

[1] Rodney adds that the Governor had made "an amazing fortune"—by all accounts much by oppression.

[2] Dutch colours were still displayed, and acted as a decoy to many French, American, and other vessels.

themselves English." Before he left, he thought that he had made the island almost impregnable, "and I hope to leave it, instead of the greatest emporium upon earth, a mere desert, and only known by report." During this time, however, he had planned an expedition against Surinam, and another against Curaçoa, when he heard by the commander of a fast-sailing ship that ten or twelve sail of the line, with seventy transports, had been seen steering for Martinique, and thought it wiser not to risk the attempt; but he sent Admiral Hood to cruise in the track. But the news was false as to numbers—the people of St. Kitt's had sent it, to lure Rodney from St. Eustatius. And his capture was not cutting off stores from the enemy—already, on March 27th, Rodney was writing to Stephens that the merchants of the British Islands, "regardless of the duty they owe to their country," have already contracted with the enemy to supply them with provisions and naval stores. Hood was driven so far to leeward, that he could not prevent the ships at Fort Royal getting out and joining de Grasse; and de Grasse escaped him again at Sta. Lucia.

On March 30 the King renounced all claim to the spoils of St. Eustatius, and gave them to the captors, to be divided as the King should direct, reserving to the settled inhabitants their land and produce, houses, slaves, cattle, etc., and all such effects as should be proved to be the property of British subjects, lawfully exported thither, or lawfully imported to Great Britain from thence. It was probably now that the wholesale sales by auction took place, when, from the greatest emporium, St. Eustatius became "one of the greatest auctions that ever was opened in the universe," as the *Annual Register* says with some exaggeration. Rodney ordered the naval stores to be taken to Antigua—every ship that went out was made to anchor under the Admiral's stern; and was examined, and if she had more provisions than were enough for the voyage to Antigua, the surplus was taken out. But buyers from other islands flocked in—invitation had been given to purchasers of all nations. The goods went much below their value, and the French agents got the best bargains. The greatest part of the spoils were then conveyed to the French and Danish islands, and so found their way back where they would have gone naturally. So while this unprecedented act raised us up enemies all through the West Indies, and incensed Europe, it did not even cut off our enemies' supplies. British merchants lost as much as Dutch, for, relying on the neutrality of St. Eustatius, our own merchants had accumu-

lated great stores of West India produce and European goods —as well as property from the islands lately taken from the French. All this was seized, confiscated, and sold at a great loss. In fact, our enemies got the benefit, and the loss fell on ourselves.

CHAPTER CI

THE LOAN OF 1781

"Lord North opened the Budget, and Prometheus-like spread forth, as from the box of Pandora, all sorts of evils and calamities through this poor nation."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, March 7, 1781.

"He so distributed it [the loan] as to have with a very great part of it bribed Members of Parliament with public money to betray the public . . . the terms were so advantageous to the subscribers, and consequently so disadvantageous to the public, that the next day after they were declared they bore a premium of 10%, and have remained ever since at a premium of between 7 and 10%."—*Sir Samuel Romilly to the Rev. John Roget*, April 4, 1781.

ON the 1st of February, 1781, Fox moved a censure on Administration for giving Palliser the government of Greenwich Hospital. The Admirals were all there—Palliser and Keppel facing each other, Palliser sitting by North, Keppel with Burke and Fox. Fox had the whole story out, and made the Clerk read the charges Palliser had brought against Keppel. And now a post hitherto only bestowed for great and meritorious services is given to a man who has preferred malicious and ill-founded accusations against his superior officer! He moved that the appointment was subversive of the discipline and derogatory to the honour of the Navy. For once North was quite serious—he made no jokes. The motion was aimed at Ministers, through the Vice-Admiral—it is Ministers who are on their trial. True, the Court has pronounced the charges false and malicious, but it did not allow the accuser to explain his motives. Sir Hugh Palliser was attacked in the dark, and brought the charges to clear his character. The facts he alleged were admitted. The hon. Admiral did not deny, he justified them. It follows that the Vice-Admiral's motives might be "bad information, ocular deception, or error in judgment." And the hon. Admiral had brought no charge against the Vice-Admiral—he had repeatedly told that House that he did not, and would not, accuse Sir Hugh Palliser. If the House replies that the Vice-Admiral resigned

his appointments—resignation is not a proof of guilt, and if the House, in compliance with "a kind of frenzy or political madness," thought proper to fall in with the popular clamour, for the sake of public tranquillity, it did not follow they adopted the whole of the sentence. The Vice-Admiral acted wisely in resigning, "till the madness, the frenzy of the times should abate." Had the House forgotten that when the Admiral's trial was over, the town for three nights was in a ferment, and he and his friends had to issue forth on a cold, raw, frosty February morning to disperse the mob? Perhaps the hon. gentleman thought those were happy times!

Lord Howe said Ministers were inconsistent with respect to those they thought fit to employ. A writer who called himself Cicero had just been charging himself with having been engaged in treasonable intrigues with Dr. Franklin, under the disguise of a game of chess. The writer was pleased to say that compassion—and some marks of penitence lately shown by this deluded nobleman ("meaning myself") would cause him to forbear to mention these intrigues. But if Cicero did not, somebody else might; so he thought it wisest to tell himself. The writer was quite right as to fact—but quite wrong as to the period. It all happened, but a year before Cicero fixed it; and if it was treason, it was but right the public should know all the traitors—so he would name his fellow-traitor—no other than the noble lord in the blue ribbon. The House would see that Cicero earned his money. Howe then spoke on the court-martial—if the Court may not pronounce on motives, where is an innocent accused officer to seek redress? And if commanders-in-chief are to be charged criminally, because they did not act up to some subordinate's ideas, what officer of rank or character will accept such a trust? As for the court-martial on the Vice-Admiral, he never understood the verdict. It said that in many instances his conduct had been highly meritorious, then charged him with an omission of duty, and after all acquitted him. Commodore Johnstone asked who but an inferior officer could point out the misconduct of his commander? He was far from approving the Vice-Admiral's whole conduct—he thought his political conduct blamable. Admiral Keppel was a brave and worthy officer, but the 27th of July was a day that gave no glory to this country. He blamed both Keppel and Palliser—then, covering his face with his hands, in affected shame—"Good God!" he cried, "can any man of sense believe that the popular joy at the Admiral's acquittal was grounded on the glory gained on the 27th of July?" He called that action "the most unfortunate Britain ever

saw"—the French became convinced that on a summer day they could engage an English fleet every way superior, and yet get safe back to harbour! He ridiculed Keppel's despatch, which said that he allowed d'Orvilliers to retire, believing he would "fight it out fairly next morning." Then he abused Opposition, who in a late debate on the Dutch had taken part against their country, and had even said in the British Parliament that neutral bottoms made neutral goods, and the Dutch might supply France and Spain with warlike stores! Here he was called to order—the Dutch were not now the subject of debate. Others cried, "Go on!" When order was restored, Keppel rose. He said he had determined never to utter another word in that House on himself, but some things had fallen from the last speaker which he must answer. God knew he liked as little to hear of the 27th of July as the Commodore, but he had had a unanimous acquittal, and the Thanks of the House. He never impeached the Vice-Admiral's courage—he said he neglected his signals after the action. Not dreaming that friendship for a man with whom he had lived in the greatest intimacy would be so repaid, he had kept silence—but the Commodore was mistaken in supposing he had taken no step to prevent such a thing occurring again—he had delivered an order, though in a manner the most gentle, which was well understood by the Vice-Admiral, and would, he was sure, have had its effect. On his return, Sir Hugh Palliser had demanded he should sign a paper which contained some of the grossest falsehoods ever committed to paper. On his refusing, Palliser called upon him, and when he still refused, "grew warm, and exclaimed, I'll tell all! I'll tell all!" Fortunately another gentleman was present. The trials had shown him more of the Vice-Admiral's neglect than he knew before—"had he but suspected what his own witnesses proved, he would not have allowed the state of the *Formidable* to prevent his renewing the engagement."

Palliser followed. He accused Fox of partiality and injustice, for his quotations and suppressions. He charged the court-martial with denying him a hearing—not so much through the Admiral as his supporters, and because they were afraid if they had heard him they could not have totally acquitted Mr. Keppel, or called himself malicious. For himself, he never knew fear but once—and that was when a furious mob, enraged by the malignant arts of a disappointed faction, broke into his house, and pursued him to the Admiralty, where they forced the gates, and he believed would have torn him to pieces but for the Guards, who came to his rescue, and he was obliged to abscond in disguise, and dared not

approach that House, or walk the streets of London. On the 27th he went singly into the middle of the French fleet, and fought his way to the end of their line—he little suspected that his doing his duty in a distinguished manner would excite so powerful a combination to effect his ruin, and that his Commander-in-Chief would join in the conspiracy. He charged Burke with proposing that a pension should be given to him "to maintain him in obscurity"—a bribe to avoid a trial! His nature revolted at the thought! He thanked him, however, for having said that if Sir Hugh Palliser had a trial, "he washed his hands of his blood, but he would take care it was not a sham trial." That adds lustre to my acquittal!

Burke totally denied (and read an extract from the trial to prove his denial) that Palliser went singly into the middle of the French fleet—the *Formidable* was so far from being single, that "one ship had to bear up and shoot ahead of her, another to backen her mizen-top sails to prevent coming on board her, and another slackened her fire" lest she should fire into her. Far from the *Formidable* being "left alone," she was jammed in among a crowd of others, all ready at hand to support her. And if he had rushed singly like a lion, into the French fleet, and then turned back with the fury of a British bull-dog, as the hon. Commodore had described, though such conduct might have entitled a young officer to praise for courage, would it not have disgraced a Vice-Admiral and leader of a division of a great fleet?

The debate displays great fierceness of party-spirit, and makes it quite comprehensible why officers did not heartily support a commander not of their own faction. Fox's motion was lost by 142 to 214.

On the 15th of February Burke once more brought in his "Establishment Bill." The year before the pile of Petitions in its favour had almost hidden the ministerial bench from the eyes of Opposition—now the table was clear. The Bill was read a second time on the 26th. Having so lately spoken on it at length, Burke now said very little. The best speech for the Bill was made by the young Lord Maitland (afterwards Earl of Lauderdale). He said that the Bill aimed at cutting away the bushes under which lurked "the serpent of influence." That undue influence existed was as evident as "any simple problem of Euclid." The Journals of the House had declared its existence, and in their subsequent conduct the House had proved the fact. He traced the source of it to the fountain-head—the mad and ruinous American war. It had become the infamous task of Ministers to bribe those whom they could not persuade. The division was

taken at midnight, when the Bill was lost by 190 to 233. So the House once more proved the existence of influence.

We have another example of this Adminstration's lack of any ability except of the sort which enabled them to ensure majorities in Parliament, in the debate on Sheridan's Motion on the Defective State of the Westminster Police.[1] That police might almost be said to be non-existent. Sheridan showed how helpless it was in checking the riots. Its incompetence, and that of the Justices of the Peace, led to the dreadful tumults of June, and to the whole country being under martial law for four months. Soldiers ought to be the last force ever used in a free country. All acknowledge the Westminster police to be "wretched and miserable," but nothing has been done to make it less so! If it be true that the office of a magistrate is so troublesome and offensive, that no gentleman of character and fortune will accept it, why not put the police on a better footing? It was nonsense to pretend the riots were a conspiracy—if so, why did not the two Houses sit night and day, instead of going into the country? The noble lord who had been tried in the King's Bench was the only person charged with high treason—"not one of his subalterns had risen above the humble charge of felony; he was both the leader and the army."

Sheridan's motion consisted of three parts. The first declared that military force may be used only when all civil authority is overborne, and the immediate subversion of all legal government is threatened. The other two affirmed the insufficiency of the Westminster police, and demanded a Committee of Enquiry. The House rejected the second; the first and third were withdrawn.

On the 26th the House again considered the second reading of Burke's Bill, for the Better Regulation of the Civil List.

"The old contest about the right of the House to controul the expenditure of the King's civil list revenue was revived, and left in the same undecisive state as before . . . the numbers were, for the motion, 190, against it, 233. The third reading was put off to that day six months, and perhaps for ever."[2]

[1] "Gentlemen would understand what he meant by the term police; it was not an expression of our law, or of our language, but was perfectly understood."

[2] A curious circumstance occurred this day. The Commissioners for Public Accounts presented their third report. In the course of their labours, they had come to "those accountants who receive public money out of the exchequer by way of imprest." Foremost of these were the treasurers of the Navy, and of these the executors of Antony Viscount Falmouth, "whose final account is dated April 4, 1689, and from whom a balance of £27,611 is declared to be then due." As there was little prospect of recovering a debt of so long standing, the Commissioners said "they did not think it worth while to misspend their time in

The moment of the Budget approached. On March 7 North told the House that he had not yet been able to hit upon the new taxes necessary to pay the interest of the new loan—for there must be a new loan. He had got £14,421,786, 11s. 11½d., but he wanted more. He proposed a loan of 12 millions. Some might say he ought to tell the House exactly what he wanted it for—that certainly was the rule—but after all he really was telling them. He was very sorry to have to ask for so much, "especially as it had to be borrowed on such disadvantageous terms—arising from the low state of our funds." But it was a calamity we must submit to. Then he gave the terms, in which lottery tickets played their usual part—with dismal details of how the money-lenders would not take the 3 per cents. at more than 55 last week—but news had arrived, and hopes of pacification had arisen, and he had got them to take them at 58—a better, but undoubtedly still a very hard bargain. But the hopes were not beyond the reach of fate—it was only a "tendency to a peace," and if it were checked, funds would go down again, and so the money-lenders would only take at 58, though the 3 per cents. had gone up to 59. With a great deal more about the relative advantages of borrowing a little at high interest or a great deal at low—all coming back to the 12 millions, and the lottery, and the hard terms.

Fox, commenting on this strange speech, said the Minister was taking credit because he might have done worse. He maintained that it was much better for the country to borrow by annuities than to add to the National Debt. Fox went minutely into this, and ended by warning them that they would not feel the true effects and burdens of the war till peace came, and "the unfunded debt was saddled upon them by taxes." Then he turned to the "political view"—still more important than the financial. The profit on the loan was £900,000—this large sum was in the hands of the Minister, "to be granted in douceurs to members of the House as compensation for the expenses of an election," or for any other purpose of corrupt influence. His hon. friend (Burke) had brought in a Bill to control the Civil List expenditure. It was a good Bill, but it failed because of the very influence it was intended to

pursuit of it." It is added that "the business of the Navy Board is a most complicated business." Monies in the hand of one treasurer cannot be transferred to his successor, and the subsequent transactions of the office carried on by the treasurer for the time being, because it requires time "for the sub-accountants to clear their imprests," and for the ships' books to be completed—"which are the vouchers for the rectitude of the treasurer's account, and which by the nature of the claims cannot be closed in many years."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1782, pp. 104-5.

prevent. The whole Civil List was only £900,000—including the support of his Majesty and many great national services. But here was another £900,000 and upwards, to be given away in the douceurs of a loan, for the purpose of procuring a majority in the House of Commons—that is, to give strength to a bad Administration. Especially he complained of the Lottery. The other night a learned gentleman had said that if anything could excuse an illegal and violent manner of redressing grievances, it would be the pulling down of gaming-houses. But the Lottery was the most pernicious form of gaming, affecting the morals of the lower orders of the people. It must have required considerable courage—not to say effrontery—on Charles Fox's part to rebuke gaming, and it is surprising that North spared him in his reply.

But North was probably too uncomfortable to display his usual sense of humour. The present was hardly a situation to be got out of by a joke. Next day Sir Philip Clerke attacked the loan, in the way most dreaded by North—bringing up Mr. Atkinson, who, it seemed, had not let this opportunity pass unimproved. Clerke said he was informed that Atkinson had no less than three millions of the loan to his own share—"this was scandalous."

North replied that the idea of Atkinson having three millions of the loan was utterly incredible—every responsible person had his proportionate share. As the House well knew, the great Bankers applied for other persons as well as on their own account. No one could possibly have three millions. Byng repeated his charges of the day before, and said that one half the loan had been given to members of that House, which at 9 per cent. was bestowing £600,000 of public money on members of Parliament. In twenty-four hours he would produce a full subscription list for the whole loan upon much better terms for the public. Burke made cruel fun of North and the loan, and the poverty of members of Parliament—too poor to have so much of the loan as was alleged. Sometimes they are too rich for it to be supposed they are corrupted—now they are too poor to hold scrip. He was persuaded the noble lord was mistaken—the House was not justly chargeable with poverty—a heavy charge to bring, for poverty is the greatest dishonour, and wealth is the only thing to make a man received in all companies. Burke compared members of Parliament to Æsop's weasel, which ate so much in the cupboard that it could not get out—in like manner, members come in sleek and slender, but when gorged with pensions and sinecures, "get such an enormous belly that they can scarcely get out again." As

he spoke, he stroked his own stomach, comparing it with North's, opposite to him, "to the inexpressible entertainment of his audience," for North's enormous and increasing bulk provoked the mirth of his own followers. North himself laughed heartily.[1] But when he tried to defend himself, he grew confused, shuffled, explained, wished he had foreseen the funds would rise (they had risen to 11 above par as soon as the terms of the loan were settled), then he would have made a better bargain. God knew he wished the funds would rise higher still.

The Loan of 1781 was the most monstrous of all the monstrous frauds on the public engineered by the North Administration; and it is a satisfaction to know that it was exposed to the light of day, and that North was covered with confusion as few Ministers ever were before or since. On the 13th of March Byng had moved for the list of subscribers to the loan; and on the 26th Sir George Savile rose from a sick bed to move for a Committee of Enquiry into the Distribution of the Loan. He said he was bringing a charge before judges who were themselves suspected of being participators. On the face of the list before the House, it appeared that immense sums stood in the names of persons who could have no title to them—bankers' clerks, who could only be holding such sums for other persons—in fact for members of Parliament who were ashamed to let their own names appear. At the same time, the most respectable and opulent names in the City—men who had always subscribed, and sometimes suffered by former loans—had been rejected altogether, or so treated that the most criminal partiality was discoverable.

Byng, who seconded, went minutely into the circumstances which Savile had only indicated in general terms. Atkinson had been the real distributor—refusing or accepting tenders as he pleased, or as the Minister ordered. Stratton and Rodbard, who

[1] *Parliamentary History.*—WRAXALL.

Burke terribly embarrassed another of North's tools. In one of the debates on the Army Extraordinaries, Jenkinson laid on the table an account where the sums transmitted to America through Mr. Harley exceeded £2,700,000. Harley rose to give some account—he read from a paper "a few gross sums" which made the greater part of this enormous amount, and sat down in about five minutes. Burke rose instantly and exclaimed, "This is the most laconic account ever given of so great a sum expended in the public service. The honourable gentleman is a species of canal through which the Government profusion passes—I imagine it does not flow off without contributing to his nourishment. Oh, how I long for an inspection of this Harleian Miscellany!" The House roared. The Alderman, who was a very fat man, stared solemnly at Burke without replying.—*Ibid.*

had lost considerably in 1778 (by the delay of the Minister), were again kept in suspense, and at last told they could have —none. Then Byng described the corrupt member of Parliament urging his claims. "Have I ever disobeyed a treasury letter? Have I ever been absent on a pressing vote? Have I ever had an opinion of my own? *Will you deny me my share of the bounty I am about to vote?*" He exposed the transactions by which Muir and Atkinson[1] had contrived to glut the market—how on the Monday Mr. Atkinson's broker had "given the turn" by selling another £100,000, and the confidential friends sold likewise, the confidential friends without names, "those who held under concealment." How this game was continued, with the express object of lowering the premium, and how "the ministerial runners" had said that as the noble lord had served them, they ought to serve him. "But such was the extravagance of the terms that the sale of between 6 and 7 millions could not bring it down to the wished-for level. Thus the purse of this country has been delivered over to a few, who have not had even the decency to preserve appearances—there was not even any rule—only the will of individuals." At one part of his speech Byng read the list of Drummond's clerks, and Drummond's brokers' clerks, who appeared as holders of scrip. Clerks holding £25,000 each—holding in all scrip to the tune of £440,000! It was obvious that this was to screen their principals, who as members of Parliament could not decently appear. At each name Byng appealed to Mr. Henry Drummond, sitting behind Lord North, and Drummond was obliged to give an assenting nod.[2]

There was no indignant denial of all this—no challenge to Byng to prove his words. He had proved them. It only remained boldly to justify facts which could not be denied, and this Adam did. There was scarcely one gentleman in the House who at some time or other had not been connected with an Administration—did they then consider it dishonourable to share in the emoluments of Government? There was no disgrace in receiving such rewards, and no dishonour in supporting measures afterwards, when those measures appeared calculated for the good

[1] Richard Atkinson was the greatest of the contractors, but he was more still—he was the political agent of the Ministry, and it was for this that he was rewarded with the lion's share of North's loans. He was also Paul Benfield's agent, and in the days of the Coalition he supported the Company's most obnoxious officials.

[2] "I never saw him [North] apparently less at his ease; not even in the session of 1782, after the intelligence of Lord Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, or during the last days that he remained in office."—WRAXALL.

of the country. He hoped those who supported Government would always have the fortitude to resist such attacks. Imputations of corruption ought to be cleared away. For himself, he had no share—in his own or any other name. The name of William Adam, which stood in that list, was not his. But he should not have considered it a disgrace to be a subscriber. In scathing words, Townshend described a gentleman who had formerly been marked by acrimonious opposition to the Minister, but had changed to a condescending approval—who used to be known as the greatest enemy of the Minister, while professing to be his friend—from whose pretended panegyrics the Minister was observed particularly to shrink. At a critical moment this gentleman had become one of the most active partisans of the Government he used to reprobate; and when people saw this gentleman rewarded with a place,[1] they could not help suspecting that a thousand or twelve hundred a year had something to do with it—that corruption, not principle, had converted the enemy into the friend. Adam retorted that he knew this was meant for him—he had opposed the war with America while he thought it unjust, but when the question was changed, and the sole object was preventing independence, he entirely approved of it; and his place was bestowed on him unasked.

Through all this, and the singular speech of Dundas, and the circumstantial indictment of Fox, North sat silent. At last he rose. He admitted that the bargain had proved rather disadvantageous to the public—but this was no fault of his. The profit to subscribers had been much exaggerated—it was not much more than half what was alleged. He went into technical explanations. He could not please everybody. Sixteen hundred persons had offered—it was difficult to select with precision out of so great a number, in so short a time. He had done as well as he could. No person, to his knowledge, had been rejected on account of his principles. As for concealment, if gentlemen chose to conceal their names, no industry or caution could prevent them. The ostensible subscriber was responsible. It was a gross falsehood that he had employed Atkinson to sell out £100,000 Stock, to glut the market, and depreciate the Stock, and he defied the hon. gentleman to prove it.

"Here there was a great cry of Order! Order!" Byng said he had not charged the noble lord with employing Atkinson to glut the market—but he was ready to prove that Atkinson's broker

[1] "Dec. 5. A grant to Wm. Adam, esq: of the office of treasurer and paymaster of his Majesty's office of Ordnance."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1780.

sold £100,000 on Monday, and another £100,000 on Tuesday, and that on Thursday requests were made to individuals to sell, "to save the credit of the noble lord; that was the reason assigned." North left this statement unnoticed! He took refuge in repeating that he had made the best bargain possible, in the circumstances; that the affair was always managed this way; that "seeming partialities" could not be avoided, and that he had given no just cause for supposing that he had made a corrupt bargain to promote his own power. The debate, which was very prolonged, had a curious ending. Just as Dunning sat down, a number of members who had been "in the coffee-rooms adjacent" came crowding in, and called uproariously for the question. The new Speaker rebuked them severely. There were, he said, "a regular and uniform set of gentlemen of a particular description, who did not think it at all necessary to attend to any part of the debate, that they might decide with decency, or vote with conviction." They went to the coffee-houses all day, and then came in towards the conclusion of the debate, "and with the utmost disorder and incivility" called for the question. Mr. Turner also was severe on members who had been enjoying their bottle and glass upstairs, till it was time to divide. With the assistance of these gentlemen, the division was 209 to 163, so there was no enquiry.

The loan was hurried through the Commons, and rushed through the Lords—so fast that Rockingham complained that even the usual formalities were omitted. But haste was necessary—the loan would not bear inspection, much less discussion. Rockingham showed that the public would pay £1,200,000 for borrowing twelve millions—no doubt it was necessary, for, notwithstanding the numerous places, pensions, contracts, and other species of emolument at the Minister's disposal, his measures were such that it required more still to "fix the wavering and doubtful among his friends."

The New Taxes had been announced on the 14th. They were 5 per cent. more on excise (except the brewery, hides, soap, and candles), and the abolition of discount on the Customs—which would bring them up to 7 per cent. This, North hoped, would produce £174,991 a year. Then there was a tax he was exceedingly loath to propose—but it was the surest means of procuring a very large sum—a half-penny a pound on sugar. It would produce £326,000.

Mr. Minchin's motion on the State of the Navy (March 25) brings out some interesting facts. With all these enormous

estimates, ships remained unfinished for unconscionable lengths of time. There was the *Narcissus*, a sloop building at Plymouth. In 1777 £3000 was asked for to complete her,—she was to be ready that May. But in 1778 she wanted £4000 more to complete her. In 1779 she was still on the stocks, and now £5000 was required; and in 1780 £5040 more—but not a stroke had been given her. And the men in the King's dockyards work slower than any others. There are more shipwrights in Deptford dockyard than in all the private yards upon the Thames put together; yet it is notorious that in Deptford the rule is, to build one ship of war and two frigates in a year—whereas the private shipbuilders, notwithstanding all they do for the East India Company, "for persons fitting out privateers," and for merchants, build for Government eleven ships of war, besides frigates and less vessels, in the same time. This is owing to the total want of discipline in the King's yards, and to the idea that the longer a ship is in building the more durable she will be. So far is this from being true, that there are at this very time two ships which cost the public very large sums indeed, and remained in their frames till their timbers absolutely became rotten, and had to be taken out—he referred to the *Royal Sovereign* at Plymouth, and the *Warrior* at Portsmouth. He moved for an account of the number of shipwrights and of sums expended in the royal dockyards, and the House rejected his motion by 147 to 46.[1]

[1] Sir Charles Bunbury, who seconded this motion, begged the Minister not to let "the commanders and proprietors of privateers, who had huzzaed him into war with Holland," prevent him from making peace.

CHAPTER CII

THE WAR IN THE CARNATIC, AND THE EMBARRASSMENTS OF THE COMPANY

"What, then! shall poor, finite, limited man, incumbered with passions and prejudices, presume to judge in secret of man, when his Almighty Parent declares that even his way shall be public and open!"—*Burke on the Secret Committee*, April 30, 1781.

IT may be said of the Fifteenth Parliament of Great Britain, that in it came home to roost all the curses of all the years since 1764. More clearly than ever does it come out in the debates of 1780–1, that the Ministry after the King's own heart was incapable of passing wise and statesmanlike measures—that everything it did was foolish and ill-considered, and invariably produced the contrary effect to what was intended. One only exception is there—the relief of the Catholics. Let it have the full credit of this—its one only merit.

Chaos and confusion followed all else that it did. One of the curses which now came home was the East India Bill of 1773. That Bill tried to compose disorders in India by setting up two separate supreme jurisdictions — that of the Governor-General and Council, and that of the Supreme Court. Warren Hastings, assisted by Philip Francis, was the presiding genius of the one; Chief Justice Sir Elijah Impey of the other. On the 12th of February, 1781, Petitions from the Governor and Council at Calcutta, and from the British subjects residing in Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, were read. They brought most serious complaints against the Supreme Court. General Smith, in moving for a Select Committee, explained how the forcing of English law on an Oriental people had worked, and how much better the old Mayor's Court had administered justice. The old Courts of the country had been suppressed, and it was a criminal offence to hold them—one result of which had been that the whole body of Mohammedan Doctors of Law of Patna had been sent prisoners to Calcutta, 400 miles off. One of

them had died of the fatigue of the journey, the others were in the common gaol, there to be imprisoned for life. The wonder is that a handful of British officials dared thus outrage the feelings, traditions, and sense of justice of fifteen millions of people. They were riding rough-shod over the whole use and custom of the East. Caste was violated—the women's apartments were broken into; temples were entered, even sacred objects had been taken away in baskets, and placed with other lumber under the seal of the Court. And all these outrages committed for nothing more serious than to recover a debt owed by a Rajah to a merchant, his relation. For resisting such outrages, men had been shot dead by a Sheriff's officer. Things had come to such a pass that the Governor and Council had used military force to restrain the Bailiffs of the Supreme Court from driving Bengal into insurrection. And when it is taken into the account that the British laws thus brutally introduced were incalculably more severe than those they superseded,—forgery, for instance, being, under Mohammedan Law, punishable only with stripes, and under English with death,—the terror of the people will be understood. Well might Wraxall say that "the insolence of conquest had done in Bengal what Rome had never done." North—who had never said that the Americans must not be condemned unheard—was very anxious to know what the Judges had to say for themselves; but the motion for a Committee was agreed to without a division.

On the 9th of April (just before the Easter holidays) North moved for a Committee to enquire into the affairs of the East India Company. There were unpleasant rumours—papers taken in a French ship mentioned an irruption of Hyder Ali into the Carnatic, and a serious defeat of the Company's forces. North reviewed the legislation since 1767. In that year the Company agreed to pay £400,000 a year to the Treasury for two years, whatever happened—a faulty agreement. A better was made in 1769, when the £400,000 was to be partly dependent on whether it could pay and pay a dividend too. It was then agreed that if it was able to declare a dividend of 8 per cent., the rest of the profits should be divided into four parts, of which Government was to take three. This was to go on till 1775, but unfortunately the Company was bankrupt—or nearly so—by 1772, and Parliament had to lend it a million and a half. Now, however, the Company had divided 8 per cent., but had not handed over the surplus profits, and yet was asking a renewal of its Charter. It was now for Parliament to say whether

its territorial possessions should be taken over by the Crown. North was clear that they belonged of right to the Crown and people of Great Britain. He also thought Government and people had a claim to share in the Company's trading profits, and was astonished to hear that the Company denied it. Three-fourths was the just share of Government.

Then came the holidays; and in Easter week the India House received advice that last July Hyder's cavalry had invaded the Carnatic; that a strong detachment under Colonel Baillie had been sent against him, and General Munroe had also taken the field. Hyder was besieging Arcot, and had defeated Baillie with great loss—put at 508 Europeans, and 3300 Sepoys.

When the House met, North asked for a Secret Committee to enquire into the causes of the war in the Carnatic. This was a great national calamity. A secret committee was so much quicker than an open one—and "such objects were more fit for a secret committee." Besides, it was not to come to any "decisive question"—only to report facts, and say whether anybody was to blame. It was not itself to blame anybody.

Fox said now the noble lord was right for the first time—he wanted an enquiry into a national calamity. Where he was not personally concerned, no man was more capable of judging and acting right than the noble lord—where he was concerned, no man was so blind and unfortunate. He was sure that now, if asked what was the cause of the disasters in the Carnatic, and someone replied Hyder Ali, the noble lord would laugh in his face. Yet when he was asked what was the cause of the American war, the noble lord answered, The Americans. What was the cause of the French war? The French. Of the Spanish war? The Spaniards. Of the Dutch war? The Dutch. North replied that the ambition and lust of dominion of the rebellious Americans was the cause of the American war—and it might come out that the ambition of Hyder Ali was the cause of the war in the Carnatic. Burke said nobody could doubt that the great cause of Hyder's invasion was the Mahratta war—if the Council had not begun the Mahratta war, this irruption would not have happened. On this General Smith begged that the conduct of the Council might be enquired into—these calamities had happened in consequence of the conduct of the Council.

On the 30th, when North moved for the Secret Committee, there was a very curious episode. Townshend said he would thank the noble lord for making an enquiry, when he knew who was to be on it, and what powers it would have. "There were a

body of men distinguished by the name of *Nabob Members*, who found particular favour in the eyes of Ministers, whatever the means by which their fortunes were acquired." It was observable that "very soon after these gentlemen came into the House, a material distinction was made between them and country gentlemen; and somehow or other, decorated with titles or with honour, they were introduced into some share of administration." No men were "so obedient, so useful, or so necessary" to the Minister. It was said that the Nabob of Arcot had seven or eight members in that House devoted to his service—they were to support the Minister if the Minister befriended the Nabob! This he thought a reason for an open enquiry.

On this, Sir Thomas Rumbold, late Governor of Madras,[1] and one of the chief persons whose conduct would have to be enquired into—rose to defend himself in a maiden speech. He knew the honourable gentleman "hinted at his situation." He ardently desired an enquiry. But it ought to start with 1773, and Parliament ought to consider whether the plan then settled had been salutary or detrimental to the Company. Rumbold was good enough to say he did not think he ought to be upon the Committee. He thought a secret committee quicker and more effectual, "yet

[1] Sir Thomas Rumbold returned from Madras early in 1781, under most injurious imputations. He was accused not only of having amassed an immense fortune, by "every unbecoming means," but of having provoked the war with Hyder, "by acts of impudent aggression," and of then, from interest or cowardice, abandoning the province entrusted to him. These charges were brought against him by Dundas as Chairman of the Secret Committee to enquire into the Causes of the War in the Carnatic. Steps were immediately taken by the House to "impound" Sir Thomas' person as well as his fortune, and a Bill was introduced by Dundas himself. Wraxall describes him as of "mean education, but by no means wanting in activity, judgment, or talents. I knew him well. In his person he was well-made and handsome;" but his features, though regular were not prepossessing. He got himself and his son into Parliament. He also got hold of a powerful friend—Rigby, whose luxurious way of living in town, and his magnificent seat in Essex, and other great purchases of land, embarrassed even the fortune he had made as Paymaster. At the change of Ministry in 1782, Rigby's balances were asked for. Rumbold, like Verres, had brought very ample resources with him to England. He had a daughter; Rigby had a nephew and heir. An alliance was arrranged. Rigby could still be very useful, "and he had no scruples." Rumbold found the money to prevent a public scandal. One of Rigby's uses was to call off his friend Dundas—Wraxall calls it "disarming his prejudices." Wraxall does not think there was proof of "anything improper," but the proceedings against Sir Thomas "did unaccountably languish and at last expired towards the end of September, 1783." A pencil note in an old copy of Wraxall's *Memoirs* says that Rumbold began as "a servant at Arthur's."

there was something about that word secrecy" not perfectly satisfactory to him. Then he gravely informed the House that the enquiry would be very intricate and laborious—there were such "voluminous masses of papers"—the committee would never be able to find the right ones without someone to help them—someone "in office at the time, and interested in the business," who would "naturally be more acquainted with these objects." There was an hon. member of that House, who was in the Council of Bengal, and there was himself—they might be of essential service, and he suggested to the House to find some method by which their services might be made use of. To show the necessity of having somebody acquainted with the business, he would give them an instance, "material to himself." The Council of Bengal wrote a letter to the Council of Madras, about a treaty which had been entered into with "one of the country powers, whose name we do not precisely recollect." "In this letter they declare that they had not written to Madras since the 29th of October, 1775, when they directed the Council of Madras not to conclude that treaty without farther authority, and that their having done so was contrary to the laws of the Company." This letter was entered regularly on the records, and "can hardly be considered inaccurate"—"and yet, in truth, that letter"—through misinformation or hurry—"was incorrect"; for they had written letters to Madras later than 1775, in which they had given express directions to conclude the treaty. This would show the necessity for someone to tell them which papers were, and which were not, "errors of office." He could "lead the committee to such papers as would vindicate his character." As for what was said about "Nabob members," he would readily declare he had never so much desired a seat in that House as at present—because he wanted an enquiry. A man can always explain his own case best himself—especially when it is "full of the intricacies" his own must necessarily be.

Not one syllable in Rumbold's speech denies, or even attempts to soften, Townshend's accusation that Indian Princes paid members to defend their interests. He passes it over in silence.

Burke made an eloquent appeal for open enquiry—the only way by which men could know whether the Committee condemned with justice or acquitted with honour. Justice must be as public as the noonday sun. A secret committee cannot be just. He had been for weeks sitting on the open enquiry upstairs; and in judging the conduct of the Judges in India it was his greatest consolation to know he was acting in the face of men.

Fox reminded the House how the enquiry into Clive's conduct ended. Instead of Clive's being adjudged to refund the £260,000 of which he had improperly possessed himself, North made him Lord-Lieutenant of a County; and Clive, who used to vote in Opposition, voted after this with Administration, and brought "all his connections with him."

The Secret Committee was carried, and North made it up with a majority of four to one for Ministers—all his particular friends, and most of them high in office.

On the 23rd of May North moved that three-fourths of the net profits of the East India Company at home, above the sum of 8 per cent. per annum, since the bond debt of the Company was reduced to £1,500,000, ought to be paid into the Exchequer, for the use of the public.[1] This was taking from the Company £600,000. General Smith said, if the Company paid this, it must borrow money next year to go on with; its affairs were much worse now than in 1778; it could better have paid a million then for the renewal of the Charter than £600,000 now. All property had suffered of late—his own stock had suffered almost 100 per cent. And it was impossible to separate territorial profits from commercial—one was "blended with the other."

Burke compared North to the lion in the fable. "This I seize," says the lion, "because I have got teeth; this, because I wear a mane; this, because I have got claws—and this last morsel, because I am a lion." As for objecting that the Company's bills might come in at an inconvenient moment, what is this but a confession that, having squandered every shilling of the immense supplies voted him, the Minister is now forcing £600,000 from the East India Company to pay his Majesty's fleets and armies!

The House had loudly applauded a part of North's speech—Burke said the shouts of the majority always went before some great national calamity. "Not one step of his that led to disgrace, defeat, and ruin, but had been preceded by shouts within those walls." As for the praise bestowed on the secret committees that sat on Indian affairs in 1772, "their reports were the cursed Pandora's box, whence sprung the American war."

Dundas said if the Company had been almost ruined, it was by the improper drawing of bills "for the remittance of those enormous fortunes that had been amassed" in India; and if the

[1] The Company had offered to lend the public £600,000, upon condition that it received in return Exchequer Bills which the Commissioners of Excise and Customs would receive as cash.

£600,000 were left in the Company's coffers "it would draw an inundation of bills, and the Asiatic plunderers would no doubt seize the occasion with avidity."

The House agreed to three-fourths profits, by a majority of three to one. On the 25th, when North moved his two resolutions,[1] James Mansfield, the Solicitor-General, attacked the Company. He was strong for compelling the Directors to submit their orders to the Secretaries of State—the very existence of this country might be destroyed by a misfortune in India, arising from unwise orders sent out to the Company's servants. He recommended gentlemen better acquainted with India than he was, "to endeavour to stop that system of plunder practised by subjects of this country, who after being in India only two or three years, came home with fortunes of from one to five hundred thousand pounds, and bore themselves with such insolent triumph, that they assumed more than the first nobles of the land. They have been disgracing us for many years, making us appear in the eyes of the world, but a set of banditti." To stop this, he proposed to oblige governors and persons in public situations to remit whatever money they acquired in their own names, and give an account of how they acquired it. There would have to be a Court to enquire into this. "A great degree of discretion—in other words of arbitrary power—must be allowed to the Court."

Townshend hoped no such Court would ever be known in England (it was to sit in England). It was not defect of law, it was influence which prevented the prosecution of offenders. "The criminals came home rich, they procured seats in that House, they became dependants and supports of Ministers; and if any of them showed a disposition to become independent, a hint was given them that they might be squeezed." He suggested making a Nabob incapable of being elected to that House.

General Smith again protested that the Company would be ruined. A considerable part of the apparent profits was owed to creditors in India, "and ought to be appropriated to the discharge of the great debt incurred by carrying on its wars." The Company owed at least £1,400,000, and the debt was daily increasing. Government was offering to allow the Company to borrow, only to pay the public its share of the profits. The Company had better give up the Charter, divide the little it had left, and carry on the

[1] "That the Company be permitted to retain their territorial acquisitions for a time to be limited; for the division of the profits, and for permission for the Company to borrow (in case of necessity) a sum not exceeding £500,000 over and above their present bond debt."

trade no longer! The Minister proposed to give more power to the Governor-General—if he knew as much of the abuse of power in India "as I do," he would want to lessen the power of any person in high office there. And as for making the Court of Directors more subject to his Majesty's orders, it was notorious that for years past there had not been a single appointment not "managed" for Ministers—either by the noble lord in the blue ribbon, or another noble lord in a high office.[1] And if the Directors had to show their despatches, it would make chaos—placing power in one place and responsibility in another. "He declared to God, such had been the conduct of some of the Directors for the last five years, that he wished the entire management of the Company were taken out of their hands, and put in the hands of Government."

Between its friends and its foes, a great deal came out in this debate about the Company's rule in India. The resolutions were agreed to.

Sandwich was a bad First Lord of the Admiralty, but a first-rate party-man. He had made a sort of "political citadel" within the Ministry, which looked only to himself. This citadel was the India House. Many leading Directors looked to him for orders. His influence was enormous, and he maintained the supremacy in Leadenhall Street by every means in his power. When the secret strings of the Company had to be pulled, application was made to Sandwich. He had more power there than the Treasury itself. Little attention was paid to anything that North said, until it was known that Sandwich said the same—then recommendations were acted upon. Sandwich was all but independent of his colleagues, through this preponderating influence with the Company. It was to this that Smith alluded.

The illness of Sir George Savile had delayed the consideration of the Petition of the Delegated Counties for a Redress of Grievances. It was considered on May 8th, and the debate throws a most instructive light on home politics. The Petition was perfectly moderate in tone. It complained of the increase of taxes, the decline of trade, manufactures, and land rents, the squandering of public money, and the "most expensive and unfortunate war." It recalled the Resolution of the House of Commons of the 6th of April, 1780, and prayed for an enquiry into all these things, and a reduction of expenditure. Ministerialists spoke of it almost as though it had been an act of open rebellion. They took the ground that all delegations out of that House were

[1] Sandwich.

"unconstitutional and illegal"—their object could only be "to awe and control the legislature." As for representing the people of England, no one represented the people but Members of that House. It may be thought that this was in effect the setting up of an idol, and then demanding that everybody should fall down and worship it. But it was not so foolish as this. Sir Horace Mann's speech gives the reason—Parliamentary elections, Parliament itself, could be bought and sold; but no King, no Administration, can buy a nation. These unparliamentary spokesmen of the people were undoing the work of bribery.

Burgoyne said government was made for the governed, not for the governors. He had signed the Petition, and thought he had acted as became a free citizen. There were cases in which even resistance to the supreme power might be lawful, because necessary. Such cases had existed. Nothing made Ministers so uncomfortable as this skirting round the precedent of 1688!

We gather incidentally from this debate that at this time passengers from Margate to Ostend went in "the emperor's packet-boat, with the imperial flag." Burgoyne mentioned this to show how completely the enemy commanded the Channel.

The usual lies were told to minimise the weight of the Petition —Sir Francis Basset said the Devonshire Meeting was very thinly attended—not above twenty present; and of the three persons chosen as delegates, only two signed the Petition. On this Sir George Yonge rose to say that the meeting was very large and respectable —as he could witness; and he was the delegate who had not signed, the reason being that he happened to be 270 miles from London when the other two signed; but he fully approved, and was ready to sign now. He added that the influence of the Crown was almost irresistible—"the largest fortunes did not secure independency; the first men in the kingdom could not help bowing to the Minister."

Not content with merely rejecting the Petition, many ministerialists and place-men demanded its rejection with "some farther mark of disapprobation," with "contempt." In a furious speech Murray, the Solicitor-General (nearly related to Mansfield), talked of the delegates as "banditti," and hinted that they might be compared to the Protestant Association who lately filled this city with terror. He regretted that he had not at once moved to have the Petition thrown over the Bar![1] But he did not then know all the facts. He talked about the League in France, the Solemn League and Covenant in Scotland, and the Fronde.

[1] This was a greater mark of contempt than throwing it behind the table.

The Declaration of Rights says Parliament is to meet frequently—plainly implying that no other body of men, in a delegated capacity, has a right to meet and discuss such subjects at all!

Lord Maitland said he hoped such doctrines would never be suffered to pass without indignation—they were hostile to the foundations of British freedom. They were doctrines which a Crown lawyer might be brought to hazard, but he could never support them as a constitutional lawyer. They owed it to "the salutary and blessed effects of association" that they were a House at all—that the country had a Parliament. When they forgot their origin, he feared they would forget their duty. Everything we enjoy as freemen, and our dignity as a people, is derived from association—Magna Charta, the Revolution, the Hanover family—in short, everything we can boast of.

Lord Fielding, a young member, had made a very insolent speech against the Petition, and had called the leaders of the associates "muster-masters." Fox turned this upon Ministers, and called North the Muster-master General. Fielding had said the country gentlemen were the true support of the Ministry. Fox retorted that it was those who were in possession of great emoluments, pensions and sinecures—it was the man who could make thousands in a morning by writing his name, or being listed in the Minister's loan—it was those who amassed fortunes in the midst of public calamity, and grew rich by the measures which made others poor. He exposed the insincerity of the arguments used. Last year, when petitions were signed by four or five thousand names, and came crowding in from every corner of the kingdom, they were so many they created alarm. This year, a petition ought not to be attended to, because only about thirty-four names are attached to it. So last year we were too many; this year we are too few. He then repudiated the doctrine—industriously preached by the Tories, and held by many Whigs—that the middle-class is the people. The great body of the nation is the people—it makes public opinion—and it is on the side of the Petition. He referred to the riots—they were a fortunate circumstance for Ministers. Administration was crumbling to pieces, and the riots were their political salvation. He spoke of Rodney—the only man of first-rate abilities who would consent to serve under them—even their avowed friends declined to fight their battles. And it was well known that Rodney was not Sandwich's choice—he owed his appointment to a near relation in the Ministry.

The Petition was rejected by 212 to 135.

On the 21st of May, in the Ordnance Extraordinaries, the House considered the expenses of the expedition to Pensacola, and the Relief of Gibraltar. Ministers explained that we had now one enemy more. Forts and batteries had been erected on our coasts —about which the less said the better, as we shall be pointing out to the enemy where not to attack us. Then the Relief of Gibraltar, and "a very useful and necessary fort in West Florida," which had caused the enemy to go to "an expence of blood and treasure more than it was worth." Then expenses in Goree, and other places—the whole not much over £250,000. Townshend made great fun of the buildings, which must not be described to the House, lest they should be discovered to the enemy. Growing serious, he asked where these expenses were to end? We have been warned of yet more to come! Burke, too, laughed at the new defences —the country was getting like an enchanted island, full of invisible pitfalls and traps. He supposed these fortresses, built God knew where, were to spring up and catch the French wherever they happened to land—no Englishman must know where they were, but the French would be sure to stumble on them. "This invisible system has been very successful." But their works are not all invisible—we can see them everywhere in this House; but the accounts are like a jack-o'-lantern—you do not know where to have *them*. Here is £17,000 for barracks and a hospital in Tobago, to lodge two companies of soldiers! And why did the powder of the Spaniards reach us at Gibraltar, when ours could not reach them? We boasted that it was made at home—home-brewed was often an execrable beverage—perhaps this was the case at Gibraltar?

Then he asked whether it was true that from some neglect the garrison of Gibraltar were left so short of powder that Admiral Darby was obliged almost to strip his fleet, to leave 2000 barrels there? And it was a singular reason for spending £20,000 on a fort in Florida,[1] that it had put the enemy to the expense of more blood and treasure than it was worth. We seemed to think only of the expense we could put the enemy to. Townshend had complained of the sums expended on the building of the Royal Academy. Burke did not grudge it. Somerset House was in ruins, the site was excellent for public offices. The old palace had been bought for the public, and no one could say the money was wasted. Such a building did honour to the present age. It was not the visible works of the Board of Works that he objected to,

[1] When Burke said this, Florida had been given up.

but their invisible ones—works never discoverable except in the estimates!

Next day a very unusual subject was in debate. The House considered Mr. Gilbert's Bill for the better Relief and Employment of the Poor.[1] It is so entirely out of keeping with sounds of war and tumult, that it is enough to say the short debate brought out the extreme misery of the deserving poor, and the extreme stupidity of the methods of dealing with the undeserving.

The Company was very unwilling to be the first with a proposal; but at last, on May 23rd, North told the House that there had been negotiations with the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman, but the propositions were not such as the public might expect. In present circumstances, he was ready to renew the Charter without a fine. But the Company had gone on to ask for all its present rights and privileges; exclusive trade for ten years longer —to reckon from March 1, 1781, besides the three years' notice under the 17th Geo. II; and the Directors to be empowered to pay into the Exchequer any sum not exceeding £600,000 per annum, in return for bills, with which, in case of unexpected emergencies, the Company may pay the duties it owes to the Customs. Such bills not to bear interest, "or be brought to market like other bills." North said his chief objection to this was, that it virtually put an end to the public's claim to the territorial possessions, by the offer to *lend* that very £600,000 to which he had always thought the public had an indisputable right. The resolution of the House of April 5, 1775, expressly declared that the public had a right to three-fourths of the surplus profits, after 8 per cent. had been paid on the Capital Stock. The public has a right to all territorial acquisitions made by private subjects.

Hussey reprobated the idea of taking £600,000 from the Company *now*. He produced calculations of the Company's exports and imports, the expenses of trade, and the balance of profit, for many years past. On an average of sixteen years, the

[1] Gilbert thought the 43rd Elizabeth "a humane and politic law"; but subsequent statutes, concerning removals, settlements, certificates, and bastard children "had perplexed, confounded, and defeated" the best part of it. The parish officers treat deserted families "with cruelty, raise disputes about their settlements, and drive them from place to place." As for the idle and the disorderly, "who are the most expensive," the houses of correction, where they are sent for "punishment and reformation," are in such a wretched state "that it is a mere mockery to send them thither." And in 41 English and Welsh counties which had made returns, it appeared that the money earned by 2731 persons committed to houses of correction for one year's hard labour, was only £126.

Company's commercial and territorial revenues together had shown a profit of 16 per cent. Nine per cent. of this was from the commercial profits, so 8 per cent. had not been divided on the part of the profits to which the public had any claim. The estimate of expenses ought to be formed from what they were before the acquisition of territory, not afterwards—this would make a difference in the fund of the Company of more than five millions in the sixteen years. The accession of the territorial possessions brought with them additional expenses, which, not being necessary to the trade, ought to be deducted from the profits. "The public had received a very large share of the Company's profits—equal to 4½ per cent. on their capital, while the stockholders scarcely had received 4s. 6d. per cent."

Dempster talked about the danger of violating Charters—remember what has come of violating the Charter of Massachusetts! It has brought us into our present difficulties, and armed Europe against us. The Company would never be so unjust as to let its bills come on the public unawares. He hoped the House would consider one thing—the Company fought to acquire its territories on the faith of the Charters, and incurred great expenses in its conquests.

On the 14th of May, Burke moved for papers about the distribution of the spoils of St. Eustatius. He reminded the House that we had many enemies and no friends. Was it wise to push war to its extremes—perhaps to provoke neutral nations to unite against us? Our Manifesto of December 20th threatened no uncommon severity—it seemed "to be torn by constraint from a heart bleeding under the affliction of unwilling strife." This affair at St. Eustatius was made much worse, because it followed close on a terrible visitation of Providence—at such a time even "the deadly serpents of war" might have been expected to remain for a time mutual spectators, as they were mutual sufferers. The hurricane seemed sent by Heaven to check the fury of mankind. Surely when "we saw what worms we were beneath the Hand of Omnipotence, it became us to crawl from our holes with a feeling of brotherly love to each other." Dr. Franklin had issued express orders that provision-ships should pass to the British as well as to the other islands without impediment; but we chose that moment for an attack on St. Vincent—so foolish an attack that we had been glad to retreat. St. Eustatius was an emporium, a mart, a magazine for all the nations of the earth. It had no fortifications, no defences, no martial spirit. Its inhabitants were a mixed body of all nations. Its utility was

its defence.[1] It was advantageous to all nations. Its inhabitants did not know that war was commenced. Such a general confiscation as had taken place was unheard of in Europe for many years. He described what had been done—warehouses locked up, merchants not allowed to ascertain the amount of their goods, nor put labels on them. Their books seized—and with them the possibility of explaining their misfortune to their correspondents in the neighbouring islands, and in Europe. When some of them applied to the Quartermaster-General for a part of their own provisions, and urged that they were starving, he replied, "Not a mouthful"; and being pressed, said, "Not a mouthful, if you were starving." Their cash was seized, and when they tried to draw on their neighbours for a temporary supply, a proclamation was issued preventing the issuing of these bills. The Jews—whom it is the more dastardly to injure because they have no nation behind them to avenge their wrongs—were the first to be deported. Like all the rest, they lost their merchandise, their bills, their houses, and their provisions. One day was given them to quit the island, and they were not allowed to know where they were going, nor to take their families. They appeared next day—101 of them in all—at the place of embarkation. They were confined in a weigh-house, and were stripped, and all the linings of their clothes ripped up, that every shilling might be taken from them. Eight thousand pounds was taken from these poor people, and 30 of them were carried to St. Kitt's. The rest were set at liberty in three days, to return to their families, and see the sale of their property. Burke told the story of one unfortunate Jew named Pollock, who had once lived on Rhode Island, and had been stripped of everything and driven out, for importing tea. His brother died of anxiety and worry. Again, on Long Island, the Americans had attacked him and other refugees—his brother-in-law was killed in the attack, and Pollock had to keep two families. Now this unhappy man was ruined once more by the British, in whose cause he had lost two brothers and all his property.

Next, the Americans were driven out. Some of these had taken refuge at St. Eustatius to avoid having a share in the dispute

[1] "This island was different from all others. It seemed to have been shot up from the ocean by some convulsion; the chimney of a volcano, rocky and barren. It had no produce. Its extent was but 30 miles. It seemed to be but a late production of nature, a sort of *lusus naturae*, hastily framed, neither shapen nor organised, and differing in qualities from all others. . . . It had risen, like another Tyre, upon the waves, to communicate to all countries and climates the conveniences and the necessaries of life."

with Great Britain. Then all the French were to go—then all the Dutch—lastly, everybody not a settled inhabitant of the island. When the Jews arrived in St. Kitt's, their deplorable condition excited such pity that help from the common stock was given them—though the island had hardly enough for itself left from the calamity of the hurricane. The legislature of the island sent a remonstrance to Rodney. The deputation saw the Admiral in the cabin of the *Sandwich*.[1] He justified himself on the ground that the property was deposited at St. Eustatius to supply the enemy. He was answered that by the Grenada Act, the Tobacco Act, and the Cotton Act, they were justified in the commerce they carried on. Rodney said the Acts were pernicious, procured by factious men for their own ends—Acts brought in by Lord Beauchamp and Sir Grey Cooper! Acts whose object was to augment the revenue! "It is a doctrine universally established, that when war is once declared, the belligerent powers are to treat one another as having mutually justice on their side, until the final issue is known." To make St. Eustatius a depôt was no crime—it was a mart for all the world. We threw open Dominica on the same principle. The merchants of Britain traded to St. Eustatius under positive Acts of Parliament. And the Admiral who sold the spoils invited the neutral islands to come and buy! What was treachery in the merchants was right in the Commander-in-Chief. If our enemies got supplies from St. Eustatius, so did we. In 1778 our Windward Islands would have been starved if they had not been relieved from St. Eustatius. If the Dutch had supplied the enemy, but refused to supply us, we might have complained, but they sold to everybody.

There was a feeble protest against condemning the Admiral unheard (which no one proposed to do); but ministerialists preferred to take the bolder tone of justification. If private persons had suffered, it was for the general good. Sound policy and strict justice required what had been done. People who engage in contraband trade must take the consequences—those who were carrying on a lawful trade at St. Eustatius need be under no apprehension. If St. Eustatius had been taken by privateers, they would have had a right to everything, so of course his Majesty's officers have the same. Germaine talked about "the passions of the humane," moved by "the masterly pencil of a Burke." They wring the heart, but the good of the

[1] Rodney is represented as sitting on a gun, in the great cabin of the *Sandwich*, "laughing at threats of lawsuits, and disposing of his spoils like a buccaneer."—Macknight's *Burke*.

whole must be preferred to the convenience of the few. As for the distress caused—there was scarcely an island captured or a territory seized where such circumstances did not happen. The treatment of the Jews, he was ready to admit, was true in its leading particulars, but it all happened without the knowledge of the Commanders-in-Chief, and as soon as they heard of it they stopped it, sent for the Jews back, and ordered them to be protected. And St. Eustatius had not supplied us as she might well have done. When Admiral Rodney was in great distress for rigging and stores, he sent to purchase them at St. Eustatius, and could only get seven tons—the Dutch saying they had scarcely any left, though it was notorious they had let the enemy have all he wanted. And he found great stores there, enough to supply all the shipping for years to come. Without regular supplies from this island the French and Americans could not have carried on the war. All the money had been sealed up, and lodged on board the *Sandwich*, separately marked, to await the decision of the Courts. The Americans were sent away, because it was not safe to let them remain. The House could judge of their numbers when he told them that the rent of the houses in the town came to a million a year. As for the property of British merchants, the most perishable had been sold, and the money arising from it packed up. He found nothing to blame.

St. John said the Proclamations and orders issued by Rodney and Vaughan showed they did know about the Jews—so did the St. Christopher *Gazettes*. Fox wanted to know who was responsible. Europe would not wait for the decisions of the Admiralty — it would instantly proclaim what had happened as a violation of the laws of war. The noble lord said he approved—he was glad he had spoken out, for now Europe would know it was our Ministers, and not our Commanders, who were the plunderers of St. Eustatius—the Army and Navy were rescued from the imputation. Dundas declared the transaction justified. He seemed to regard the fact that the rents were a million a year a sufficient reason for banishing all the Americans. The conqueror was to use the necessary means to secure his conquest. This "had on many occasions obliged warriors to put their prisoners to the sword."

With this remark of the Lord Advocate of Scotland, the defenders of the confiscation may be left.

Byng said the merchants of London had suffered very severely by what had been done, and might be ruined. Suppose

France should imitate our example, and confiscate the property in the islands she has taken? What will happen to the merchants of Great Britain?

The motion for enquiry was lost by 86 to 160, and so one more suicidal act of a suicidal war was adopted as a wise and just policy.

But an adverse fate attended the affair from first to last. The confiscation reduced many British subjects to beggary, but it did not put an end to the American war, nor did it even enrich the captors. That same May, Commodore Hotham was convoying twenty-one ships laden with the best of the spoils, when M. de la Motte Piquet came out from Brest, and intercepted him twenty leagues to west of Scilly. Seventeen of the twenty-one were taken, and carried into Brest. And next November the Marquis de Bouillé retook St. Eustatius in a manner so ignominious that it seemed like the finger of Fate. He had sailed from Martinique with 2000 men, but off St. Eustatius the night was so rough, that he lost his boats and many men, and by daybreak had only landed 400. He was cut off from his ships—he thought he was lost, but resolved to make a dash for it. He was two leagues from the town, and the defiles of that volcanic isle could be held by a handful against an army. But his troops were the best in France—chiefly Count Dillon's Irish Brigade—the fighting Irishmen whom our insane laws had made a present to our enemy. Part of the garrison was drilling in a field at sunrise, when de Bouillé fell upon them. They fled headlong—clogging up the drawbridge, so that at first it could not be raised. When it was, the French entered with them.

Colonel Cockburne, the Commandant, returned from his morning ride to find his island taken—he was made prisoner as he sat on his horse.[1] De Bouillé treated him generously, restoring a sum of money he claimed. But spoils to the amount of two million livres—the produce of the late sales, and said to be the property of Admiral Rodney and General Vaughan—became the prize of the victors. And very soon

[1] Cockburne had written the day before to General Christie at Barbadoes, that he had completed all the batteries, and made the island impregnable to all but a surprise, which he would answer for it should never be the case while he commanded. The French expected nothing but to be made prisoners—their arms had got so wet in the surf that most of their firelocks would not go off.

St. Christopher's was taken, and Nevis and Montserrat. And to the end of his days Rodney was harassed by lawsuits brought against him by British merchants, until he wished that a cannon ball had taken off his head the day he beat de Grasse.

CHAPTER CIII

"AN ACCURSED, BARBAROUS, DIABOLICAL WAR"

"It is difficult to express which appears more strongly, the manly fortitude of the great majority last night in rejecting the hacknied question of a Committee for considering the American war, or the impudence of the minority in bringing it forward . . . every repetition of this question only makes the rebels and the Bourbon family more desirous of continuing the war, from the hopes of tiring out this country."—*The King to Lord North,* June 13, 1781, 25 min. pt. 7 a.m. (Fox's motion.)

HARTLEY'S Motion for a Bill to Restore Peace with America turned chiefly on the question whether the Crown had power to make peace, or whether Parliament must begin by rescinding the coercive Acts. North tried to escape speaking, until Savile forced him. The only points of any interest are the assertions on both sides as to the state of things in America. Fox commented strongly on Galloway's statements that five-sixths of the Americans were in the interest of Great Britain. Suppose anyone had told the Pretender that five-sixths of the people of England and a powerful army were for him, would Louis XIV have thought it necessary to help him? And when we ask what sort of an army General Washington has, they tell us it is without clothes or ammunition, and nearly reduced to nothing. And Sir Henry Clinton? Oh, his are the very flower of the army—well fed and clothed, with magazines and ammunition, in high spirits, flushed with success. And the American Generals have no military knowledge, reputation or skill, while ours are the best in the world. Then why can't we subdue one-sixth — some say one-tenth — of the Americans? We have had abundance of victories—we were covered with laurels last year, we have voted thanks to Cornwallis, Clinton, Rodney, Arbuthnot, and God knows whom. But what does it all avail?

On the 12th of June Fox moved for a committee to consider the state of the American war. He held in his hand the last *Gazette,* with Cornwallis' despatch. He said he would show from it the impracticability of reducing America, and so

avoid the stale repetitions so often complained of. The despatch confirmed everything said in the former debate. Ministers said then that a signal victory would call the rebels to the British standard. Here is a victory—but what are the fruits? "Nothing but disappointment." The victory of Guildford drew after it all the consequences of something like decisive defeat. Lord Cornwallis could not have been more unfortunate if he had been beaten.

After commenting on Cornwallis' complaints of the difficulty he had in obtaining intelligence in a district supposed to be full of his friends, Fox turned to the enormous expense of this unsatisfactory war. Cornwallis put his force at 3000. By the Army Estimates it appeared that no fewer than 83,000 men were employed in America, including a small number in the West Indies—so, to put 3000 men in the field we had to pay for 83,000. He did not mean to say that there were actually so many—perhaps not a tenth part of them could be produced; but the account of them lay on the table—he would suppose every man charged in the estimates was really employed; then we had to keep 80,000 on the defensive that 3000 might be brought into the field. What else need we say to prove the ruinous tendency of the American war? Cornwallis had said that defensive measures would be the ruin of our affairs, yet we cannot act offensively without keeping about 25 to 1 of our troops in garrison. And even this computation does not go far enough—for nine-tenths of the Americans are our friends, besides the 83,000 troops. He was, however, rather inclined to believe that a great part of our force was engaged in watching our friends, instead of their being any use to us.

Lord Westcote (whose son fell in Arbuthnot's engagement off the Capes of Virginia, on the 16th of March) called the war "a holy war." "The motives which gave it birth were generous and noble;" being "an intention to maintain the inalienable and indubitable rights of the sovereign power of the king, the parliament, and the nation," and the "unity of the British empire."

Townshend read a passage from Cornwallis' despatch — "timid friends, inveterate enemies; without provisions, cut off from all the resources indispensably necessary for the support of an army, in the heart of a hostile country." Every feature of the campaign gave him such an idea of immediate distress and future disaster, as proved to him that the fate of the struggle was already decided, and America, at least on the

plan of coercion, irrecoverably lost. The only question was, could she be treated with? A noble lord had called this a holy war—he presumed he did not see the exact similitude this war bore to other holy wars. Like the holy wars in Palestine, it was conceived in injustice, prosecuted with cruelty, whetted by false zeal, and had ruined and depopulated the country which engaged in it. Like the holy wars, it drained the country of its best blood and treasure. Like the holy wars, it exhibited a herd of fools and madmen, led on to ruin and death to promote the purposes of a set of knaves. He asked members how long they would see the blood of their relations spilt and their money expended, to no purpose?

Sir Edward Astley rose on this. He, too, had lost a son in the war—he had still three sons in the King's service, and he wished to know if any more of his blood was to be spilt in a war which must end in our ruin if pursued any longer? Nothing but a truce could save us. Besides, our blood and treasure was thrown away. Notwithstanding the sums voted by Parliament, the subject had not protection—the County of Norfolk, which he had the honour to represent, was so defenceless that one hundred men landing in it might do incredible mischief.

And now those who had been foremost to support the war began to turn on each other. One after another, like ghosts, they rose and began to rake up the past—words and votes. Rigby said accusation must reach much farther than Ministers; when the Stamp Act was passed there was not a single dissentient. When the Port Bill was brought in the very gentlemen now so violent were silent. There was not even a division.

Charles Turner denied this—he had opposed the Port Bill. He remembered the language used—one gentleman, since deceased (Van), said *Delenda est Carthago*; let Boston be burnt, raze the foundations! Another learned gentleman (Dundas) recommended starvation; a third (Vyner) offered 12 shillings in the pound of his landed property to help subdue the rebels.

Lord Howe rose to ask Germaine what he meant by hinting that Cornwallis had misled him? Germaine meanly wriggled out of any intention to reflect on Cornwallis—he only meant that being on the spot he was likely to know. Then came Burgoyne—it might be urged with "great seeming plausibility" that he had approved of the American war. He wished to explain that he always thought we had no right to tax America. But America resisted, and showed an intention of striking at our supreme power. He went cheerfully to America, hoping matters might yet be

accommodated—or even if we had to fight them, that the war might be short. But when he got out, he found the King's armies not as numerous as they were represented, and the people who opposed the King's government did not at all resemble the description given of them in that House by Ministers. The very first spectacle he saw was a very melancholy one, and "gave directly the lie" to everything he had heard before.

The unfortunate General then touched upon his own misfortune —comparing his situation with that of Cornwallis. He, too, was assured he would find powerful friends, and meet with no resistance of any consequence. But what did he find? A most powerful resistance, troops of timid—or rather treacherous—friends, and hosts of powerful and inveterate enemies. Like Cornwallis, he issued a Proclamation, "fraught with threats in case of disobedience, and benefits in case of acceptance." There were a few friends in the Province of New York, but whenever they made a show in his favour, like the ill-fated Carolinians, they were attacked, captured, and cut off. Another feature common to both expeditions was false intelligence. It was this which caused the affair at Bennington. The treacherous conduct of false friends who led him to make that diversion totally defeated all his plans. Like the rebel Southern army, the army opposed to him was plentifully supplied. Those supplies were drawn from several hundred miles distance, and the road was partly in countries then in possession of British troops, but so certain were they of the attachment of the inhabitants that they did not send a single file of men with the waggoners to protect the carts! This more than all else convinced him of the temper of the people at large.

After Adam had declared he had not heard a syllable to justify a peace, and Onslow had said we only needed union among ourselves to beat the Americans, young William Pitt rose. "Very particular attention was paid to him," and though the question had been called for, when he rose both sides of the House were silent. Adam had spoken as though Chatham approved of the war. Pitt rose to say that his father reprobated the American war in all its parts, as well as on its principle. As for his own opinion, he would affirm that the war was a most "accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical war." When Pitt had done, Dundas rose to deny he ever proposed to starve the Americans. He might have used the word—"it was a provincial word"—he had not the good fortune to be born south of the Tweed—he used it in the debate on the Hindon Election. If gentlemen wished to jest at his expense, in God's Name let them do it—but they should

not lay down as a fact that he recommended so horrid a means as reducing America by famine.

Two members indignantly denied that the war was popular. "There was not even a pretended majority out of doors," said Mr. Martin. "The nation had been deceived into it," said Mr. Bankes, a new Company member. Dundas said that Chatham was against making peace at the price of independence. He recalled the day when Pitt's father—"feeling the stroke of death"—poured out his last strength in execrating all who would "vote away the British Empire."

The debate lasted long. At last the ministerial benches became clamorous, calling out, "Question! question!" They even tried to shout down Fox when he rose to reply.

The most important part of his speech is the passage about independence. Several speakers had remarked upon his having declined to move for declaring America independent. "Thinking as I do, that America is irrecoverably lost," he would not hesitate a moment, but for other reasons—first, because America might then demand other concessions of territory—then, because we are not perfectly acquainted with the connection between France and America. But as for declaring America independent, "it is perfectly ridiculous to debate about it"—America *is* independent already. He quoted the precedent of the War of the Spanish Succession, in Queen Anne's time. Then, as now, there were two powerful parties in the nation—one thought it better to let the Duke of Anjou mount the throne of Spain than to plunge the country in war; the other thought the liberties of Europe depended on preventing a branch of the House of Bourbon sitting on the throne of Spain. The Parliament of that day insisted on war unless Anjou would renounce his claim. Let Parliament now insist on peace.

He did not shrink from referring to Chatham. But is it fair to quote words which applied to a totally different situation—words spoken in 1778, when France was just entering into the war—before Spain and Holland joined, before France disputed the empire of the sea—more than all, before the American Militia were transformed into regular troops? Chatham reprobated the war in the strongest manner before a drop of blood had been shed. He moved to withdraw the troops from Boston. "Even in the last session, he preached peace to Ministers." At the end, Fox spoke of Franklin—who in Paris, just before hostilities began, compared the war which he foresaw to the Crusades. If he thought that in 1776, how much stronger is the comparison now!

The House divided. By 172 to 99 it resolved to go on with

the war. So ended the last debate on America before Cornwallis' surrender.

The history of the American war shows us the "job" in its most gigantic proportions of Army Contracts, Navy Estimates, and Public Loans. The debate in the Lords at the end of June on Phillips' Compensation Bill shows it in the little. The Bill was for granting to Mr. Phillips the sum of £3600, for discovering "a composition or powder" for destroying weevils in ships' biscuits. The debate lasted several hours, "and was carried on with great heat between the Lord Chancellor and Lord Sandwich." Sandwich enlarged on the losses in naval stores (he had a list of them), and the damage to the health of the Navy caused by eating provisions which had fallen a prey to weevils. He thought it so important to keep our seamen in health, that he had lately "put the nation to a very considerable additional expense in the article of sourcrout," being convinced this was one of the greatest anti-scorbutics ever invented. He had not allowed himself to be prevented "by notions of an ill-timed economy" from consulting the real good of the service. In the present case a monopoly had been suggested as a means of helping Mr. Phillips—instead of a grant. But he had ever been an enemy to monopolies—in the end they always proved detrimental to the public. If they succeeded, the patentee could raise his price; and they seldom did succeed; and as you could not tell the difference between the real thing and the counterfeit, even the patentee did not benefit. As for deferring the Bill to next session, considering the peculiar distresses Mr. Phillips laboured under, this would amount to a negative—and he was only to have the odd £600, until the efficacy of his powder had been satisfactorily proved. Sandwich assured the House that the Naval Boards had already purchased great quantities of the powder, so confident were they of its efficacy.

Grafton said if such great quantities had been tried this would create a demand, and Phillips could not possibly be as distressed as the noble lord described him. Why not buy enough to relieve Phillips from his embarrassments—we can reward him afterwards? Sandwich, quite forgetting the sour-crout, replied with virtuous sternness that he could not disburse a shilling of the public money without the previous approbation of Parliament.

Thurlow now joined in. He was merciless. The preamble contained a falsehood on the face of it—it said that Phillips' powder

destroyed caterpillars, flies, etc., in gardens, whereas the experiments made warranted no such assertions. The House had not a single fact to show the powder destroyed weevils and cockroaches, any more than ants. Their lordships had just disposed of a similar Bill to this—to pay one Dr. Smith £1200 for visiting the prisons—though there is a provision for this in each County. If Smith were paid by Parliament, there is not a town in the kingdom in which some other doctor would not start up—the table would be covered with apothecaries' bills. Instead of proving to us the efficacy of the powder, the noble lord praises sourcrout—he did not wait to ask your leave then, but now he cannot buy the powder without it. The powder was to kill weevils, cockroaches, etc.—in the provisions for the Navy. These were strange names—some of them he had never heard of before. The animals, too, were strange, and the strangest of all was the operation of the powder. It was first administered to the poor caterpillars—they grew very sick indeed—but unhappily recovered. This trial convinced those who made it that the powder was very efficacious, "but the patients were not of the right kind." The noble earl acknowledges very ingenuously that he has not yet found the right kind.

The Earl of Suffolk reminded their lordships of a former painful incident, when "a man from Manchester" pretended to have discovered a way of dyeing cotton goods in a most extraordinary manner. Specimens were laid on the table—they were most beautiful. But after the fellow had got £5000 for his wonderful discovery, it was found it "was all a cheat"—the colours "flew in three or four days," and lost all their beauty.

On July 3 the Lords went into Committee on the powder. A gardener was examined, who said, as far as his experiments had gone, the powder had answered extremely well. Three other witnesses were called, "whose testimony seemed rather favourable." Sandwich then begged the House to lose no more time in seeking proofs—the case was completely made out. But Walsingham interposed—he believed in the powder once, but had changed his mind. Earl Ferrers was more damaging still—he had called that very morning at an eminent gardener's at Brompton who had tried it. The gardener showed him an apricot-tree, with its leaves "withered and dropped"—it had been dressed with the powder. The gardener assured him he would not for anything eat the fruit of trees

which had been sprinkled with the stuff—whereupon it struck Ferrers that it would be worse still actually mixed with the food of his Majesty's seamen. He seriously exhorted their lordships to take care what they were about.

On the 10th the Bill came on for the last time. Sandwich now wished to back out of it—the subject was not sufficiently important to take up so much of their lordships' time—let it be deferred. Lord Rockingham, however, saw no reason for deferring, when witnesses were there to be examined. He was astonished to hear the noble lord doubt of the powder, after telling the House that he had already purchased a hundred tons of it for the use of the Navy.

Then the terrible Earl of Abingdon made one of his most terrible speeches. He pretended to have come down to the House supposing that the Bill to destroy Vermin was a Bill to destroy the "vermin of the Court," who, "ever since the American war began, have been sucking the blood of the nation"—such as "contractors, under all their different classes, genera and species—jobbers, place-mongers, bank-note or ready-money parliamentary men, loanists—otherwise called scrip-men," with all other varieties, "which from want of acquaintance with the natural history of this creation I am unable to name." If this be the object of the Bill, I shall be most sincere in my support of it. It is with the body politic as with the body natural—the more beggarly a beggar is, the greater number of vermin he always has about him; and the more the State is impoverished, the more it is eaten alive by these vermin. He was afraid, however, that far from being a Bill to destroy jobbers, the Bill was in itself "the most arrant job in the world"—so shameful an imposture that he could only consider it as a boyish trick to see how far the Parliament of England can be duped. How is the powder to be used? Is it to be done—as we were taught at school to catch sparrows—by putting salt on their tails? We are gravely told it is a secret—and for this secret we are to pay £3600. "I am told, my lords (but this is no secret, for I read it in the public papers), that one Pinchbeck, commonly called *Patent Snuffers Pinchbeck*, is to be a jobber in this job; and here lies the secret, my lords, a secret that may lead to the discovery of a great many others. And now I will come to my knowledge respecting this Philippic powder —as it may well be called, for in killing vermin, it creates Philippics that may be of use in directing your lordships' judgments upon this Bill." It seemed that the French, as well

as the British West India Islands, had been so much afflicted with vermin of late years, that they offered great rewards for a cure. This probably set Mr. Phillips' inventive genius to work. He offered his services "to the body of West India Planters and Merchants" in London, and a committee was appointed to enquire into his invention. The parties met, and Mr. Phillips was asked how the powder was to be used? He replied, by strewing it over the ground. To what depth? About the eighth part of an inch. And what was the price? He answered, that if much of it was wanted, the price was a guinea per hundred-weight. On this the committee calculated the expense of the powder per acre, and found that an eighth of an inch deep an acre would cost 350 guineas—or more than six times the fee simple of the land. "I need not, methinks, my lords, tell your lordships what was the report of this committee to their body."

Even Sandwich could not answer this, and so Phillips did not kill the weevils in the ships' biscuits.

The American prisoners of war at Plymouth now petitioned the House (June 20). They were even yet treated worse than other prisoners of war, and had been "almost naked and barefooted" during the winter, because Government had ceased supplying them with clothing every three months, as before. They had only two-thirds the allowance of bread given to the French, Spanish, and Dutch. They complained that what was given was only enough for "one sufficient and satisfactory repast" a day. The other prisoners could buy food at the prison-gates, and had a full supply of clothing every three months from the agents of their respective States, but the Americans were allowed no agent, and the sums raised by benevolent persons in Britain were now expended.

Dr. Farquarson, "of the Sick and Hurt Office," was examined. He could not deny that the Americans had half a pound of bread less than the others—"but the Americans had more than the rebels of 1745." And they were very healthy—only eighteen deaths in four years. Fox, Keppel, and Burke spoke for the prisoners. North said the allowance was sufficient—"every gentleman in that House knew that the bulk of the people of England, particularly the labouring men, were not able to lay out individually" as much for food as was allowed the American prisoners. They had a far greater allowance than the rebels of 1745; they had even a greater allowance than our own troops serving on board transports. A precedent of former wars made Government

incline to give the French, Spanish, and Dutch a greater allowance, but we should not say the Americans had too little because the French had more than enough.

The House refused to do anything, and in this spirit was the war prosecuted up to the instant of Cornwallis' surrender.

In the summer and autumn there was the usual scare of the combined fleets. We were getting used to them—it was said that they appeared "as regularly as the swallows." They sailed this year from Cadiz at the end of July—the French under de Guichen, the Spanish under Don Luis of Cordova. The first thing they did was to land 10,000 troops in Minorca on August 19, and possess themselves of the whole island except Fort St. Philip.[1] They then came—forty-nine ships in all—to cruise as usual at the mouth of the Channel. Such was the state of our Intelligence, that we knew nothing till they were actually in the chops of the Channel, and Admiral Darby, then at sea with only twenty-one ships, would have fallen in with them if he had not happened to meet a neutral ship, which gave him warning. He returned at once to Torbay (August 24), and moored his squadron across the bay while waiting for orders from the Admiralty. Meanwhile the navies of the House of Bourbon formed a line from Ushant to Scilly, hoping to intercept some of the great homeward-bound convoys and prevent succour being sent to Minorca.

Darby was soon reinforced up to thirty sail, with which he was ordered to go instantly to sea, to save the great West India convoy expected shortly. Adverse winds, and waiting for reinforcements, delayed him till September 14, and the utmost anxiety prevailed for the outward-bound fleet for America and the West Indies, then in Cork harbour. Cork itself was believed to be in danger—it was totally unfortified, and was full of stores. The Irish Volunteers marched thither, and the regular troops stationed in Ireland were hurried south.

Darby himself was in the utmost danger. The French and Spanish Commanders held a Council of War, but decided that it was too hazardous to attack him under the protection of his own coasts. It was said that de Guichen was eager to fight, believing he had the English fleet as in a net, and that the war would be decided if it was destroyed; and one of the Spanish officers—third in command—agreed with him. But the others thought the risk too great, as from Darby's position the combined fleets could not bear down upon him in line of battle, but must advance singly, exposed to cross-fires. Better intercept the homeward-bound West

[1] Sir William Draper, Junius' victim, now commanded at Minorca.

India fleet. It was known afterwards that the combined fleets were in extremely bad condition — always much under-manned (especially the Spaniards); they now had a great number of sick, and many of the ships were in such a condition that they could hardly have lived in anything of a gale. The French had discovered that their great new ships of 110 guns were so unmanageable as to be dangerous. Early in September, too, "hard weather" came on, and they were glad to get into port. De Guichen returned to Brest on the 11th of September, and nearly lost one of his largest ships going into harbour.[1] Paris was so disappointed that at the theatre the Comte d'Artois only protected de Guichen from insult by taking him arm in arm into his own box.

The West India "trade" was so late, that in watching for it Darby lost the chance of a rich Spanish fleet from America with a supply of treasure. It was noted as curious that none of the three fleets took a single prize, though so long at sea. It is clear that once more we were saved, not by our own courage and promptitude, but by the mismanagement of the enemy.

[1] See the account in the *Annual Register*.

CHAPTER CIV

ARNOLD IN VIRGINIA

"The Enemy are at Suffolk with Two thousand five hundred or three thousand men. . . . I believe nothing will induce them to Attack us, but the hope of succeeding in a surprise, and despair of keeping their tattered force together, through want of Provisions, and the necessity of their ploughing their Lands to prevent a famine the ensuing year."—*Arnold to Sir Henry Clinton*, Portsmouth, Va., Feb. 13, 1781.

IMMEDIATELY after Arnold deserted the American cause, a great effort was made for the exchange of all officers on both sides. This exchange included an equivalent of British and German soldiers for those Americans who were prisoners in New York. And at last an effort was made to obtain the release of the army of the Convention, now being removed from Charlotteville as too near Cornwallis. Nobody was eager to receive them—Maryland said she was too small a State to support so great a burden. For all this, however, the army was quartered for some months at Frederickstown. Meanwhile many officers, among them Riedesel and Phillips, had been fully exchanged, and Phillips was to be associated with Arnold in Virginia, because the British officers turned restive at being commanded by Arnold. Arnold was now a Brigadier-General in his Majesty's service. But those who profit by treason never love the traitor; the British officers in New York loathed the sight of Arnold, and could hardly bring themselves to be civil to him. André was one of the most popular officers in the army, and anger at his fate mingled with the natural disgust of men for a turncoat.

Arnold wrote proclamations, setting forth to his countrymen that he had betrayed them for their own good, to save them from the evils of the French Alliance. France a Catholic Power, too! For he had the vileness to appeal to the old Puritan intolerance—he denounced Congress for attending a requiem mass for a member of the French Legation, as a participation "in the rites of a church whose Anti-Christian corruption your pious ancestors would have witnessed with their blood." This

ambiguous allusion was followed by others equally unfortunate. After accusing "your mean and profligate Congress" of applying the funds of the country to its own use, he wound up by advising them to have the wisdom "shown of late by Ireland," of being "content with the liberality of the parent country." So the traitor held up Ireland as an example of the blessings of British rule, and pointed to the few grudging concessions made to Irish trade as "liberality."

Congress answered by a counter-proclamation, summoning Benedict Arnold to come and take his trial as a traitor.

Arnold's grand scheme had failed, and with it his hopes of going down to posterity as another Monk or Marlborough; but he thought he might still render conspicuous service as a leader of loyalists in a separate command. But there is no man on earth stupid enough to trust the traitor he has bought. Clinton thought it best to be careful. He remembered that the great Marlborough did not always betray the same side. So, though he sent Arnold to Virginia, to help Cornwallis by a diversion, he sent Simcoe and Dundas with him—to advise. Also to keep an eye on the new convert. What if he tried to buy the forgiveness of his old friends by a second betrayal?

Arnold's expedition was intended to replace the troops under Leslie—now sent to Cornwallis in Carolina. He sailed on December 20. His force consisted of British, Germans, and refugees—1700 men in all. He embarked breathing fire and slaughter, saying he would give the Americans a blow that would "shake the continent." He had a terrible voyage. The ships were separated, half the cavalry horses and several guns had to be thrown overboard, and he did not land in Hampton Road till the 30th. Next day he embarked his troops in small vessels and went up the James River. The main object of the expedition was to paralyse the rebellion by destroying the resources of that rich province—especially tobacco, the source of Virginia's wealth. He was also to rally the loyalists, and prepare to co-operate with Cornwallis. Symonds commanded his squadron.

He reached Richmond on the 4th of January—from the opposite side of the river Governor Jefferson watched the troops march in. Jefferson could do nothing—there were not more than 200 men in arms for the defence of the town.

Steuben was commanding in Virginia; but he had sent away every man he could spare to reinforce Greene—he had only about 600 left, without clothing, blankets, or tents, and hardly fit to take the field. Jefferson had called out the militia;

but for the moment the country was panic-stricken. Arnold sent a message to Jefferson, offering to spare the town if his ships were allowed to come up the river unmolested, to take on board the tobacco in the warehouses. Jefferson indignantly refused, and Arnold burned the town. He made the merchants give up their rum and salt—"the rum they staved in the streets, and the salt they threw in the river." They also destroyed a rope-walk—an industry in which Arnold may have felt a particular interest.[1]

Colonel Simcoe had been sent to Westham, eight miles off, to destroy "the finest foundry in all America," as the British account calls it. After this the army returned in triumph, bringing with it "five fine pieces of brass cannon." The troops had marched sixty-six miles in three days, "through an enemy's country," often retarded for hours by the breaking down of bridges. There were some skirmishes on the way back.

Arnold at once began to fortify Portsmouth.[2] The great rivers of Virginia fall into Chesapeak Bay—whatever enemy was master of the Chesapeak could go up these rivers, and ravage the country. This was what Arnold intended. Such an expedition had been long clamoured for in England. Why, it was asked, did Sir Henry Clinton shut up himself and his army in New York? Why did he not strike at Virginia, whose rich tobacco plantations were the support of the war—the means of paying the interest on the French loans? But to do this effectively New York must have been given up. With all its posts and islands and vulnerable points, it required an army to hold it. Cornwallis was always urging its abandonment, and the removal of the war to the Chesapeak.

On the 16th of February Clinton heard from Cornwallis of Tarleton's defeat at the Cowpens. On March 25 he wrote a letter which plays a great part in the future controversy between the commanders. In this letter he tells Cornwallis that the Chesapeak is blocked by a French naval force superior to that of Captain Symonds; that Washington has sent some New England troops under Lafayette; that he greatly fears the Admiral has not sent Symonds a relieving force, and if he has

[1] Arnold asked one of the prisoners what the Provincials would have done with him if they had taken him. "The man replied, 'They would have cut off the leg that was wounded at Quebec and Saratoga, and buried that with the honours of war; and hanged the rest of you on a gibbet fifty feet high.'"

[2] "We have all been greatly deceived in the extent and nature of the ground. There are many places in the river much easier defended with half the number of men."—*Arnold to Sir Henry Clinton*, Portsmouth, January 23, 1781.

not, to send the troops ready embarked at New York "is to sacrifice" them and the convoy—yet to delay them might be to sacrifice Arnold. Clinton always maintained that this letter ought to have prevented Cornwallis from coming to Virginia. It reached Colonel Balfour at Charlestown on April 6. Balfour opened it, and wrote to Clinton that he would send it to Cornwallis at Wilmington—only seven days' sail from Charlestown. We learn from Cornwallis' despatches that he knew the letter was at Charlestown. He was complaining of not hearing from Clinton. Clinton asks why he did not wait? And why did not Balfour send on the despatch? Again, Clinton is astonished that the news from Rawdon did not make Cornwallis return to Charlestown, and hold that post, if he could do no more.

Admiral Arbuthnot was in Gardiner's Bay (Long Island) with a squadron, whose object was to prevent the French fleet from getting possession of the Chesapeak. On the 22nd of January, 1781, a great snowstorm scattered his ships, wrecked the *Culloden*, and dismasted the *Bedford*.[1] A third ship, the *America*, was for many days supposed lost, but she returned. Arbuthnot set to work to repair damages, and get the masts out of the *Culloden* and into the *Bedford*. While he was doing this he heard that the French fleet was ready to sail from Rhode Island—supposed for the Chesapeak, and was taking in troops. He sent word to Clinton, who immediately ordered "the *élite*" of his army to be ready at a moment's warning to sail with Phillips, under convoy of the Admiral. This was on the 13th of February. On the 19th Clinton was alarmed to learn from Arnold that a French fleet and two frigates had blocked the Chesapeak, and seemed to be favouring a co-operation against Portsmouth. Clinton's despatch of this date is one long-smothered complaint of Arbuthnot, who could not be induced to say whether he intended to convoy the troops or no. Arbuthnot's despatch, on the other hand, suggests that the Commander-in-Chief could not be got to say whether he intended to send them. Each of these two great officers professes not to know what the other expects him to do—each is waiting impatiently for "advice" from the other.[2] In the end, Arbuthnot determined to intercept the French fleet first of all.

This appearance of the French ships frightened Arnold not a little—he knew too well his fate if captured. He pulled his own ships high up Elizabeth River, till the water was so shallow that

[1] The *Culloden* and *Bedford* were both 74's.

[2] Clinton's Despatch of March 18, and Arbuthnot's of March 20.

the 64 could not get within four leagues of him—one frigate ran aground in trying. De Tilly, who commanded the little squadron, thought it wise to return. At the entrance to Chesapeak Bay he met and captured the *Romulus*.

Clinton got the men for Phillips ready, and waiting where they could embark the instant Arbuthnot came. But he did not come—he only sent word that the French were reported to have sailed from Newport on the 27th of February. On the 1st of March Clinton heard that Washington was detaching a considerable force southwards, under Lafayette, and that a large body of Virginia Militia was collecting to attack Arnold in concert with Rochambeau.[1] And still Clinton did not know whether the Admiral had sailed, or whether, if he had, he had gone to the Chesapeak, or whether the whole, or only a part of the French fleet had left Newport. He wrote entreating to be "favoured" with "positive advice," that he might know whether he must risk the troops under convoy of two frigates, not sure whether the Admiral would be there to cover them. Almost as soon as this letter was despatched, came one from Arnold to say that Tilly was gone, and the Chesapeak clear. Clinton hurried on his preparations—making Captain Hudson, who was to command, take all the ships then at New York, and any others he might pick up on his way. And the same day he heard from Arbuthnot that at two that afternoon (March 8) he had received undoubted intelligence that the French fleet and army were evacuating Rhode Island, "and that their destination is certainly Virginia."

It was true. At last Washington had been able to spare 1200 men for Virginia; Rochambeau, with another 1200, was to go to the Chesapeak, with Destouches and the fleet. Lafayette commanded the Americans—with strict orders from Washington to enter into no communications with Arnold which could directly or indirectly screen him from the punishment due to treason. If he fell into their hands, he was to be executed in the most summary manner.

At sunset of the 5th of March Washington—who had gone to confer with Rochambeau—watched the whole French fleet sail out of Newport harbour, "with a fair wind." The final act of the war had opened.

Clinton was less fortunate—the wind delayed the troops at

[1] "There is great news to-day concerning Arnold, who has taken cannon, and destroyed iron-foundries, and played the devil with the Rebel army."—*George Selwyn to the Earl of Carlisle*, March, 1781.

New York till the 20th. Before that Arbuthnot had come up with the French, and engaged them. On the 13th he spoke a vessel from London to New York, which had seen the French fleet the day before—8 large ships, 3 frigates and a tender; and at six in the morning of the 16th, 5 strange sail were discovered to N.N.E., "steering for the Capes of Virginia." Arbuthnot came up with them about 14 leagues S.E. by E. from Cape Henry, and prepared to give battle. The wind was west, the weather so hazy that the Admiral could not see all down his line. At a quarter past ten he made the signal to attack—he had formed his line "a-head at 2 cables' length asunder, the weather being squally." It was "a distant action." About noon, he hoped to reach the enemy; and the whole line tacked, "the van first." At half-past one the enemy, aware of the danger of engaging to windward in a high sea, "wore and formed their line to leeward." At two the British van wore, and in a few minutes the *Robuste*, which led, was warmly engaged. The ships in van and centre were all engaged by half-past two, and by three the French line broke; their ships soon began to wear, and form the line again, "with their heads to the ocean." At twenty minutes past three, the British wore, and stood after them; but the *Robuste*, *Prudent*, and *Europe*, "the headmost ships," had received the whole of the enemy's fire in their rigging, and were so entirely disabled as to be unmanageable. The *London's* maintop-sail was also carried away, and she was unable to pursue; and at half-past four the haze came on so thick "as entirely to intercept the sight of the enemy." Next morning the British squadron (the *Robuste* and *Prudent* having to be towed) anchored three leagues to eastward of Cape Charles, and next evening they were all safe in Lynnè-haven Bay.[1]

In this engagement the forces were nearly equal—the French had more men, the English more guns. There were 8 ships and 4 frigates on each side. Arbuthnot's ships were much crippled; the French fleet went back to Newport. Both sides claimed the advantage; but the British succeeded, and the French failed, in what they came to do. The French were cut off from the Chesapeak, Arnold was saved, and the collapse of the war was staved off for six months.

Meanwhile Lafayette was pressing on for Virginia. On March 3, at the Head of Elk, he halted to hear news of the French fleet. Steuben had written that he thought Portsmouth might be taken "sword in hand"; but Lafayette doubted whether Arnold would

[1] In this indecisive action, Arbuthnot lost 30 killed and 73 wounded.

be so easily caught—he had had too much time to prepare. On the 14th Lafayette was at York, where he found Steuben, busy and confident—nothing was wanted now but the fleet, to co-operate by sea. The fleet was late. While he waited, Lafayette reconnoitred Arnold's works at Portsmouth—there was a small skirmish. On the 20th he heard that a fleet had anchored within the Capes—supposed to be the French. Arnold would certainly be caught. An officer of the French Navy went to visit the fleet, and returned with the news that it was the British!

Washington, greatly disappointed, and knowing that Phillips was on his way, urged Lafayette to push on for the south and join Greene. But the troops demurred—they were from the Eastern States, and were afraid of the climate of the south. They began to desert. Then Lafayette tried a stratagem. He announced in General Orders that an enterprise of great difficulty and danger was to be attempted—he hoped the troops would stand by him. Those who were unwilling, however, would have permits to return home. Men who had not been ashamed to say they were afraid of swamp-fever, became as anxious to go as they had been to stay behind. A sergeant, too lame to march, hired a cart to keep up with the army. Everyone was eager to volunteer. Lafayette borrowed money in Baltimore to buy them summer clothing, and the ladies of Baltimore contributed.

Phillips and the reinforcements arrived at Portsmouth on the 26th of March. He immediately took over the command, to the great joy of the British officers. The whole force was now 3500 men. It was impossible for Steuben to oppose it—he withdrew troops and stores to the interior. And, as usual, the militia, whose three months' term was up, went home.

Writing to Germaine on April 5, Clinton enclosed a handbill, published at Philadelphia, with an account of the Battle of Guildford. But his letter is not cheerful. He has many excellent plans, but they all require more men. With the 10,000 he asked for he would not have had a doubt of success; as it is, he dares not flatter himself; and if the new French reinforcement arrives, his situation will even be critical. Arnold is trying to persuade him that the posts in the Highlands can be carried by *a few days'* regular attack. Clinton doubts it, but is ready to take any opportunity of securing West Point—to attempt and fail would be death to our cause in the present stage of the war. But Washington is very much reduced by detachments, and there is his lordship's promise of six British regiments and 1000 recruits —and Cornwallis' success in Carolina may enable him to send a

reinforcement from thence. And Vice-Admiral Arbuthnot is at last appointed to relieve Sir Peter Parker at Jamaica; Clinton confesses he waits with some impatience for this event—unless it takes place, and the promised reinforcement arrives from England, he will be constrained to resign his command.

Clinton always generously acknowledged Cornwallis' merits as a General in the field, whatever he might think of his policy in planning a campaign. Phillips was not easy. "We know so little." He suspected Cornwallis had suffered very much after the action, but hoped he was fortifying himself somewhere near Guildford. The situation in Virginia was discouraging. In a letter to Clinton, Phillips says that Norfolk and Princess Ann Counties are "timorous." We have "bad half-friends" there—and perhaps many concealed enemies. He does not know what to do with friends, if we had them; we could not arm them all. They would be a charge while we stayed, and be undone when we went. He is for a small post, "where the army can help the navy"—a post to be held by five or six hundred men. The works at Portsmouth need additions. Clinton almost turned on the faithful Phillips for saying this—did not Arnold assure him a month ago that he could defend Portsmouth against the whole force of the country and 2000 French? In this letter (of April 11) Clinton says that Portsmouth seems to have been chosen with a view to protecting "our friends" of Princess Ann, etc. "But by your account, a small house, I fear, will be sufficient for them all." On the 13th he wrote to Cornwallis, suggesting his coming to the Chesapeak, "in a frigate"—if Carolina is settled. He was still expecting the six regiments. Two days after Phillips wrote again that Portsmouth was a bad post—not calculated for defence.

Just about this time Clinton got a good many intercepted letters, one of which caused Phillips extreme joy. It was from Washington, and gave such a description of his distress that Phillips was convinced that, with a tolerable reinforcement from Europe, 1781 might see the end of the rebellion.

The works at Portsmouth were now sufficiently safe for Phillips to leave 1000 men there, and take the other 2000 on another destroying expedition. Uppermost in his thoughts was the idea of co-operating with Cornwallis. The very day he left Portsmouth,[1] he and Arnold wrote a joint letter to Clinton, proposing plans "by which the Rebels may be much harassed and distressed"—which distresses "must ultimately reach Mr. Washington's army in the Jersies," and be an advantageous prelude to the real

[1] April 18.

campaign. Supposing they could not co-operate with Cornwallis, they might attack Lafayette at Baltimore about the 1st of May, and if he retired, "Maryland would be left defenceless," and then they could destroy the enemy's magazines right away to the Potomac, with the arms, ammunition, and shipping. After that could come the attempt on Philadelphia, or they could return to New York and co-operate with the main army. There was only one thing—Portsmouth was a bad post, for many reasons. And it is a mistake to think the inhabitants of Princess Ann will help—they are scarcely friends, and perhaps many of them enemies.

In the middle of writing this letter, Phillips set off in the *Maria* for the transports which were to carry him and his expedition. As he dropped down to Hampton Road, on the evening of the 19th, the *Maria* ran aground, and while she waited "for a swell of the tide," the *Amphitrite* express-boat came in with a despatch from Cornwallis — dated April 10th, from Wilmington, and written in haste, as the *Amphitrite* had only called in there on her way from Charlestown. It was a terrible letter, full of disappointment, almost of despair. The loyalists of North Carolina would not rise. After Guildford, when he was at Bell's Mill, "where the greatest numbers of our friends were supposed to reside," many of the inhabitants "rode into Camp, shook me by the hand, said they were glad to see us, and to hear that we had beat Greene, and then rode home again; for I could not get 100 men in all the Regulators' Country to stay with us, even as Militia." And now, "With a third of my Army sick and wounded, which I was obliged to carry in Waggons, or on horseback, the remainder without Shoes, and worn down with fatigue, I thought it was time to look for some place of rest and refitment." So he had come by easy marches to Cross Creek — taking care to pass through settlements "described" as the most friendly; but to his great mortification he found there was not four days' forage within twenty miles; and the navigation of Cape Fear River—with hopes of which he "had been flattered"—quite impracticable; 150 miles to Wilmington by water, on a river seldom more than 100 yards wide, between high banks, and the inhabitants on both sides almost universally hostile. He is impatiently looking out for the expected reinforcement from Europe — without it he cannot even maintain himself in the upper country—where alone he can hope to preserve the troops from "the fatal Sickness, which so nearly ruined the Army last Autumn." "North Carolina is, of all the Provinces

in America, the most difficult to attack, unless material Assistance could be got from the Inhabitants."

Phillips saw at once what it meant. He wrote to Clinton that he feared the 15th of March was "that sort of victory which ruins an army"; and that he had called a Council of War to consider whether it was best to persevere in the projected attack on Petersburgh.

Clinton replied to Phillips that all operations to the north must now give place to helping Cornwallis. But he cannot understand what Cornwallis has done with his men, and why he had only 1360 *before* the action — when he entered North Carolina, he had 3000, exclusive of cavalry and militia! Perhaps he weakened himself by detachments? And I hoped *he* could spare *me* troops!

On the 30th Clinton wrote Phillips a "Secret and most private" letter. He still cannot understand what Cornwallis means to do —he says an army cannot move in North Carolina without the assistance of friends—and "he does not seem to think we have any there—nor do you." But how can he want reinforcements, with nine British battalions, and detachments from seven more; five Hessian battalions, a detachment of Yagers, and eleven Provincial battalions! And if he wants reinforcements, what hopes have I of a force for any "solid" operation? There was also a good deal about the Admiral, who was "more impracticable than ever"; and "from the Admiral's strange conduct, I doubt when or whether the reinforcement will ever reach you."

When this letter reached Petersburgh, Phillips was dead, and Cornwallis opened it, with Phillips' other official correspondence, on his arrival.

The Council of War decided to make the attack on Petersburgh —it might create a diversion in favour of Cornwallis. The Light Infantry, part of the 76th and 80th, the Queen's Rangers, the "Yagers," and the American Legion, were already embarked, and next day they went up the James River. On the 20th several landings were made. Simcoe was sent to York, and Phillips and Arnold landed at Williamsburgh, where some militia retired on their approach. Colonel Abercrombie, who had gone up the Chickahominy in boats, and destroyed several armed ships, the State shipyards, warehouses, etc., returned, as did Simcoe, who had only taken a few prisoners and spiked a few cannon; and the whole force went on to City Point, where they landed on the 24th, and on the 25th marched on Petersburgh. A mile below the town General Muhlenburg, with 1000 militia, "disputed

the ground inch by inch for nearly two hours"; but after considerable loss on both sides retreated across the Appomatox. Phillips marched into Petersburgh, and destroyed 4000 hogsheads of tobacco, a ship, and a number of small vessels on the stocks and in the river. The *Annual Register* notes that this was "the principal part of the whole annual remittance for France," collected at Petersburgh. Next day, at Chesterfield, Phillips burned a range of barracks, and destroyed 300 barrels of flour. The same day Arnold marched four miles to Osborne's, where a considerable force of ships was drawn up in a line to oppose him. There was a sharp fight. The Provincials were soon obliged to strike their colours, but not before they had scuttled and fired several of their ships. Arnold may have remembered the fight on Lake Champlain. Besides the ships, it was reckoned that 2000 hogsheads of tobacco were taken and destroyed here, "without the loss of one man."

On the 29th they were at Manchester, a small place opposite Richmond. Here they destroyed 1200 hogsheads. They had counted on Richmond too,—a great part of the State military stores were now there,—but Lafayette, with 2000 men, had arrived by forced marches the night before, and been joined by 2000 militia and 60 dragoons (mostly young Virginians of good family), and was very strongly posted on the high north bank of the river. Arnold's despatch notes that Lafayette and his army were "spectators of the conflagration" at Manchester.

The same evening the army returned to Warwick, where they destroyed "a magazine of 600 barrels of flour, and Col. Cary's fine mills," several warehouses, 150 hogsheads of tobacco, a large ship and a brigantine afloat, and three vessels on the stocks, a large range of public rope-walks and storehouses, and some tan and bark houses, full of hides and bark. On the evening of the 1st of May they were at Bermuda, opposite City Point, and from here they fell down the river as far as Hog Island. Here, on the 7th, Phillips received a letter from Cornwallis to say he was marching to Petersburgh.

Instantly Phillips countermanded the fleet, and the troops were landed at Brandon the same evening. On the 9th a forced march was made back to Petersburgh, where they arrived in the night, surprising two of Lafayette's aides, sent to collect boats for his army. As the British went down stream Lafayette had moved towards Williamsburgh; and when they returned he returned too. When Phillips and Arnold arrived, they found Lafayette preparing to cross the river to Petersburgh. Next

day, he marched back to Richmond — where it was reported Wayne had arrived with the Pennsylvania line.

Phillips had been ill for some days, with fever following a chill. The last forced march—and doubtless the terrible anxiety for Cornwallis—was too much for him. By the time he reached Petersburgh the second time (on the night of the 9th) he was too ill even to give orders. Arnold's despatch of the 12th says he is so weak and low it will be some time before he can go through the fatigue of business. He died on the 14th.

Phillips was a brave man, whose natural integrity shines through all his conduct. In spite of his irascible temper, he was beloved and trusted by men so unlike each other as Clinton, Cornwallis, and Riedesel. He deserved to die in more soldierly fashion than as the victim of a tobacco raid. We know that he detested this sort of warfare, and perhaps in those last hours of fever and weakness his thoughts reverted to the fierce days by the Hudson, when the "rebels" beat him and Burgoyne in fair fight. He was now trying to beat them by destroying their property.

NOTE. — We may doubt Anburey's story, that Phillips' last hours were disturbed by Lafayette's cannon across the river, that a flag of truce was sent to ask Lafayette to cease firing, but that the firing was continued; that a ball passed through the next room just as Phillips was breathing his last, and that his last words were, "My God, 'tis cruel, they will not let me die in peace!" Anburey's story is hearsay—he was still a prisoner with the Army of the Convention, at Frederickstown, when Phillips died; and though the letter containing the story was not written till the 11th of July, he makes Phillips die at Richmond — thus bringing him within reach of Lafayette's cannonade. Arnold distinctly says that Lafayette marched first to Osborne's and then to Richmond. He was not at Petersburgh after the 10th, and Phillips did not die till the 14th.

CHAPTER CV

THE REVOLT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE

"Tuesday, February 20. Arrived the Grantham Packet from New York, with despatches. . . . They bring information of the revolt of the Pennsylvania line from General Washington's army, with his Excellency General Clinton's proposals to them."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1781.

It was not surprising that little was done to check Arnold's ravages—the wonder was that anything could be done at all. On the 1st of January, 1781, the Pennsylvania line revolted.

The six Pennsylvania regiments (about 1500 men) were in huts at Morristown. Their General, Wayne, said of them, "Poorly clothed, badly fed, and worse paid, some of them have not received a paper dollar for near twelve months." They were exposed to the piercing cold of a New Jersey winter in "old worn-out coats, tattered linen overalls, and but one blanket between three men." The officers could do little but show sympathy — they showed it by standing for hours exposed to wind and weather among "the poor naked fellows," as they worked at their redoubts—often helping with their own hands, and sharing the men's bread and water. This made the men feel that their officers shared their hardships, and kept them quiet for a time. A great many of them had enlisted "for three years, or during the war" — a form of words which originally meant that the war was sure not to last longer than three years. But the three years passed, and the war did not end; and the men were held to be still bound. This was hard — but there was worse. While these veterans' hard-earned pay was left owing, gold—actual gold—was forthcoming for the new levies, who had only served six months, and were offered this bounty as a bribe to renew their enlistment. This was the finishing stroke.

On New Year's Day — having been warmed up by the extra allowance of rum—they turned out under arms, and said they were going to Philadelphia, to demand redress from

Congress. Vainly Wayne tried to pacify them. They were beyond being moved by words. He cocked his pistols—they presented bayonets. "Do not mistake us," they cried, "we are not going to turn Arnolds—if the enemy come out, we will fight them under your orders as we have done before. We love and respect you—but you are a dead man if you fire." "Mad Anthony" saw they meant it, and did not fire. But there was an affray; a captain was killed, and several were wounded. Three regiments which had taken no part in the mutiny were most unwisely paraded under their officers. The mutineers made them join them, and seized six field-pieces. Thirteen hundred of them set out that very night for Philadelphia, under the command of their sergeants. Alarm-fires were kindled on the hills, alarm-guns fired off at the posts. Wayne sent provisions after the mutineers, lest they should help themselves at the expense of the country people. He also sent two officers to ride for their lives and warn Congress, and another to tell Washington. Then he rode after the mutineers with two of his colonels, to be ready to soothe them.

Washington received the news at New Windsor on the 3rd. His first thought was to go to them — but he dared not leave his own troops, whose misery was as great. It would not do to leave them to talk the affair over in his absence! Moreover, the British were sure to hear what had happened, and might fall on his camp. He wrote to Wayne, urgently deprecating violent measures. He ordered 1100 men to be ready to march at a moment's notice, and sent Knox to the Eastern States to represent the consequences of neglecting the wants of the army, and entreat them to send immediate supplies to their respective lines.

It is a satisfaction to know that Congress was in consternation. A committee was sent to meet the mutineers at Trenton.[1]

Clinton heard the news about the same time as Washington, and instantly sent emissaries with offers — protection, free pardon, the pay due from Congress should faithfully be paid them, without any expectation of military service in return, unless voluntary—the sole condition that they should lay down their arms and return to their allegiance. They were advised to move behind the South River, and assured that a body of British troops should be ready to protect them whenever they desired it. It was pointed out to them that Congress *could*

[1] General Sullivan, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Atlee, and Dr. Witherspoon.

not pay them, and would be sure to treat them severely if they returned to "their former servitude."

The mutineers had got to Princeton; the Jersey Militia was keeping so sharp a watch on the coast and the roads, that Clinton's emissaries had the utmost difficulty in getting through. The mutineers had now given themselves a general in the person of Sergeant Williams, a British deserter. They were considering proposals—the committee had arrived. They were perfectly orderly, and kept up all the routine of discipline. Again they said they did not mean to turn Arnolds because they had not got their arrears. On the 9th they went on to Trenton. Here they answered the proposals — they had now a Board composed of Sergeants. Clinton had crossed to Staten Island, "with the *élite* of the army," a ship of war, and a number of boats, ready for emergencies; but not venturing to do more at present than "favour the revolt, and offer asylum," as "one step further might have re-united them to their oppressors."

At Trenton, on the 10th, the mutineers accepted the terms offered by Joseph Reed, President of the Council of Pennsylvania—with great tact Congress had left the Pennsylvanians to be dealt with by their own State.

They were given the clothing they required. All whose time was up were discharged; the rest had forty days' furlough. In effect, all their demands were granted — they asked no more than that faith should be kept with them, and that they should no longer be left naked and hungry to fight the battles of their country. It went hard with the British emissaries. "To remove every doubt" the mutineers gave them up; they were tried as spies, and hanged at the cross-roads near Trenton.

This terrible affair had been tided over; but Washington was afraid it had been passed over too lightly; and on January 20th some of the Jersey troops rose and demanded the same terms. Again Clinton sent offers by another emissary, and moved troops to Staten Island. This revolt was smaller and easier to deal with — the mutineers were mostly foreigners. And Washington's method was more military. He sent a detachment of the Massachusetts line, which arrived at daybreak and surprised the mutineers. Five minutes were given them to parade without their arms, and give up their ringleaders. They did so; the two most guilty were instantly executed and the mutiny was at an end. Dreadful as these

revolts were, they taught the Provincial Governments a lesson, and they showed both the friends and the enemies of America that whatever might happen, and whether the Americans quarrelled with their own Government or not, they would never return to Great Britain.

CHAPTER CVI

CORNWALLIS COMES TO VIRGINIA

"The disaster of the 17th of January cannot be imputed to any defect in my conduct, as the detachment was certainly superior to the force against which it was sent, and put under the command of an officer of experience and tried abilities."—*Earl Cornwallis' Answer to the Narrative of Sir Henry Clinton.*

"Tarleton tells us you promised to co-operate and did not."—*Note by Sir H. Clinton.*

"why did you not return to S. Carolina my good Lord. You knew of the dismantled state of C. Town, you had apprehensions for Lord Rawdons corps and carolina, by going even by sea which you might have done in 12 hours, or by Waggamaw were you were invited by Col. Balfour, you saved Lord Rawdon S. Carolina and Charlestown; by going to Virginia you risked not only all these but Gen[l]. Phillips corps which you had ordered to meet you at Petersberg."

"own honestly my good Lord did you Ever think operations in Virginia safe, practicable or likely to succeed, without a covering Fleet did you expect one when you forced operations there?"—*Sir Henry Clinton's Notes to Earl Cornwallis' Answer.*

CORNWALLIS came into Petersburgh with the army from Carolina on the morning of May 20, to find Phillips dead. He at once took over the command from Arnold.

Until Cornwallis actually arrived in Virginia, Clinton hoped he would not come—the risk appeared to him extreme, to say nothing of the consequences of abandoning Carolina. On the same 20th of May he heard from Balfour of Rawdon's success at Hobkirk's Hill; but the letter which began with victory ended thus: "Notwithstanding this brilliant success, I must inform your Excellency that the general state of the country is most distressing, that the Enemy's Parties are everywhere. . . . Indeed I should betray the duty I owe your Excellency, did I not represent the Defection of this Province so universal, that I know of no mode, short of depopulation, to retain it."[1]

Till Cornwallis came, Clinton clung to the hope that we should now meet with no serious misfortune in South Carolina; even if we had to abandon Camden and Ninety-Six, and only defend the

[1] Lieut.-Col. Balfour to Sir H. Clinton, Charlestown, May, 6, 1781.

district within the Congaree and the Santee, we should only be "giving up two bad posts, which it is difficult to supply with provisions, and quitting a part of the Country, which for months past, we have not really possessed." And now Cornwallis was about to look for another bad post, also in a part of the country which we did not really possess.

On May 26 Cornwallis was at Byrd's Plantation,[1] north of James River. The reinforcements from New York had at last arrived. Cornwallis writes that he has granted Arnold's request to go to New York—he thinks your Excellency wishes for him, and he is indisposed, and unequal to the fatigue of service. "*He will represent the horrid enormities which are committed by our privateers in Chesapeak Bay*," and are so very prejudicial to his Majesty's service.

We were still trying to burn ourselves back into the affections of our rebellious subjects. But at this moment even the least sanguine of the British commanders—and probably Clinton was that least sanguine—never dreamed that before five months were over all would be lost in America.

Cornwallis' despatch of May 26 has great importance, because it makes the first mention of Yorktown. Cornwallis tells Clinton that he means to dislodge Lafayette from Richmond, and destroy the magazines and stores in the neighbourhood, collected for him and Greene. Then he thinks of removing to Williamsburgh, "which is represented as healthy," there to wait till he hears from the Commander-in-Chief. He hopes by then to have better information as to "a proper harbour and place of arms. At present I am inclined to think well of York. Portsmouth cannot be made strong, is remarkably unhealthy, and would not protect ships of the line."

In this letter there is a curious passage about a "Mr. Alexander" (really Colonel Rankin), a loyalist, with a "plan." Cornwallis thinks "Mr. Alexander's conversations bear too strong a resemblance to those of the emissaries from North Carolina," who beguiled him into believing he would find friends there. Bitter experience had evidently made Cornwallis shy of "friends." "I have often observed," he says, "that when a Storm threatens, our friends disappear." He thinks the taking possession of Philadelphia by "an incursion" (which seems to have been "Mr. Alexander's" plan)—without keeping or burning it—neither of which appears to be advisable—would do more harm than good to the cause of Britain. He believes Virginia is the only province in which offensive war can be carried on—but a considerable army

[1] The property of Mrs. Byrd, a loyalist, who furnished supplies for the British troops. She was one of those compensated in 1784–5.

will be necessary. With a small force, the business would probably end badly, though it might succeed at the beginning. He begs Clinton to believe that he does not wish for the command of such "a proper army," leaving his Excellency at New York "on the defensive"—such sentiments are "far from his heart." Few things would give him greater pleasure than for his Excellency to relieve him by his presence from so much anxiety and responsibility. As for keeping North Carolina, he does not think we can keep the posts in the back of South. "It is infinitely difficult to protect a frontier of three hundred miles against a persevering Enemy," with no water communication possible, and few "useful friends." And the corps he had were all very weak—some of the British regiments retain nothing but the name. It was not detachment that weakened us at Guildford, but losses in battle, sickness, etc. It will be seen that Cornwallis was here replying to Clinton's "secret" letter to Phillips.[1]

It is impossible to understand the events of the fatal year 1781, without taking into account the relations between Clinton and Cornwallis, and between both and Lord George Germaine.[2] That worst of all Secretaries of State liked to hamper—and as he imagined, control—the officers who carried out the measures of Government, by setting them up in independent or semi-independent commands. He had given such a command to Cornwallis, allowed him to communicate with the Cabinet directly, and accepted his plans, even when they involved spoiling those of the Commander-in-Chief. As soon as Clinton had got some expedition ready, he was ordered to detach half his men to Cornwallis—for some scheme of which he seldom approved. Even the amiability of Cornwallis' disposition could not prevent friction in such a situation, and Clinton was kept in a state of constant irritation. Too well he knew that the responsibility for

[1] Clinton's notes to this letter are: "It will be observed that his Lordship had already broke into my plans by coming into Vir[a], and advising the Cabinet to adopt solid operations there——"

"keeps himself disengaged and when he receives my instructions does not pay the least attention to them." (See note on p. 1008.)

[2] Disagreements were not confined to the Army.

". . . I absolutely loathe this station. . . ." It is rendered more disagreeable "by the total disagreement of the commanders-in-chief. They have both written home complaints of each other, and Sir George has taken Clinton's side, and has wrote also against Arbuthnot. Commodore Drake, second in command, is hardly on speaking terms with any of the three, so you may guess how the service is carried on."—*Lord Robert Manners to the Duke of Rutland*, Resolution, New York, October 31, 1780.

any failure would be thrown on him. These two honest and honourable men were at daggers drawn. As far back as 1778, Cornwallis—an enterprising young General with adventurous ideas—was so dissatisfied with Clinton's policy of predatory excursions,—successful, but leading to nothing, or to worse than nothing,—that he had wished to resign. The King refused to accept his resignation; but Lady Cornwallis was breaking her heart at her husband's absence, and Cornwallis went home on long leave. He returned in July, 1779, as second in command, with a commission entitling him to succeed Clinton, should the latter die or become incapacitated. It was a delicate situation, even had the two Generals been on the best of terms. But they differed fundamentally on military matters. Cornwallis had his way about the Southern Expedition. Clinton took Charlestown, and Cornwallis' policy seemed vindicated. Clinton returned to New York, leaving Cornwallis in his semi-independent command, and believing the conquest of the whole South was assured. He was rudely awakened from this delusion by Ferguson's disaster. By that time, to professional differences were added personal jealousies on Clinton's side. Cornwallis had the ear of Germaine, and Germaine took no pains to conceal that it was so.

It was Clinton's theory that as long as Cornwallis was near Rawdon,[1] and listened to Rawdon's advice, all went well; but when Major Ross was near, and Cornwallis listened to *him*, all went exceedingly ill.[2] Smarting under his own position—all his representations ignored, and Cornwallis' plans preferred, and New York three times suffered to come within three weeks of starvation[3]—Clinton had grown suspicious. In his notes to the published correspondence, he even suggests that Cornwallis either did receive his despatch of March 5, but, not intending to obey, suppressed the fact—or that Balfour, aware of the contents, was "too good a courtier" to send on to Cornwallis what was really a "forbidanse" to go to Virginia. He says that Ross

[1] Cornwallis was on the most affectionate terms with Rawdon.

[2] "Certain ignorant evil councillors joined you, one of them lately from Europe, you disapproved all the Com^r in chief did, and which you had approved before you claimed merit . . . which you knew belonged to the Commander in chief . . . you move into N. Carolina for no other purpose I am convinced than to receive the command from me."

Major Ross, "ever busy with some plan to Clogg us."—*Clinton's Notes to Cornwallis' Account.*

[3] "By neglect of Gov^t I was 3 times within 3 weeks of starving."

Nor had he much money. He complains that Arnold's affair cost £6300 out of the Secret Service money.

told Cornwallis that Clinton meant to resign if Arbuthnot was not removed, and would probably resign at once if Cornwallis came to Virginia, and hints that this was the true motive of his coming. He even says that perhaps Cornwallis told Germaine New York did not need to be reinforced![1]

On professional questions, the two Generals now differed *in toto*. Having come to Virginia, Cornwallis wanted to conquer it. Clinton declared this to be impossible till Carolina was conquered — Cornwallis should have stayed in the South.[2] Cornwallis replied that Carolina was fed from Virginia—that the whole war was fed from Virginia. Clinton said we had not "friends" enough there—our best chance was in Pennsylvania. But he was strong for a station, or "place of arms," to command some river on the Chesapeak. Cornwallis was convinced this was useless — it would take an army to make such a post safe. So they went on, writing long letters to each other—Clinton making almost ludicrous efforts to be tolerably civil, and letting off the steam in letters to Phillips—some of which Cornwallis opened and read after poor Phillips' death. It is easy to judge after the event, but it seems as though Clinton was right in thinking Cornwallis had better have remained in South Carolina—even if he had only held Charlestown; and Cornwallis was right as to the uselessness and danger of a post in the Chesapeak. But Admiral Graves agreed with Clinton on this point, and Washington outwitted both Clinton and Cornwallis by one of the most skilful and elaborate plans ever devised in war.

On the 29th of May Clinton wrote Cornwallis a very rasping letter about his movements in North Carolina. When he heard of the retreat to Wilmington, he hoped Greene was so totally *hors de combat* that there was no fear for Rawdon.

[1] In 1782 several pamphlets were published, by the Commanders and their respective partisans, each exculpating himself from the blame for Yorktown. Clinton gave copies of these pamphlets to his friends—enriched with copious notes, often jotted down in such indignant haste that he forgets capitals and stops, to say nothing of spelling. In one of these notes he says he will for ever impute the loss of America to Ministers preferring the plans of a second in command to that of the Commander-in-Chief, and not even telling him.

[2] "I sometimes suspect that E. Cornwallis was determined to put himself within my reach, under the Idea that I was in temper to resign the command to him and that he was blind to every other consideration. . . . I do realy believe there were men in that Army that had rather an —— should be lost than that I should save or recover it."—*Clinton-Cornwallis Correspondence*, I. 109, N. (See also p. 110, for suggestion about the *Amphitrite*.)

Now he finds that Cornwallis knew all the while that the Carolinas were in a most critical state. "Lord Rawdon's officer-like and spirited exertions" have indeed "eased me for the present." But he dreads the consequences of Cornwallis' departure—"but what is done cannot now be altered." He will most gladly avail himself of Cornwallis' valuable assistance in carrying on operations in Virginia. He wishes he could say when reinforcements will arrive, but he has not heard from Germaine since February 7. The Admiral is now off the Hook —Clinton has in the most pressing terms requested his attention to the Chesapeak, and told him that if the enemy possesses it even for forty-eight hours, "you will be in the most imminent danger." General Robertson has also tried to impress him with the same ideas; "but till I have an answer in writing," I cannot be sure he will think the Chesapeak the first object—he wants to go to Rhode Island, and cruise off Nantucket, to catch a small French reinforcement which he has heard is coming from Europe.

At last the Admiral did answer in writing, and promised to guard the Chesapeak—Clinton encloses a copy of his letter.[1]

Cornwallis had now moved to a plantation on the James, belonging to Governor Jefferson. Here he planned two expeditions. Tarleton rode 70 miles in twenty-four hours, "to disturb" the Assembly of Virginia, then sitting at Charlotteville—but the Assembly had timely notice, and adjourned beyond the Blue Ridge, and Tarleton only caught seven of them. Simcoe was sent farther on to destroy stores, but Steuben had removed them over a river too deep to be forded. It was perhaps in anger at these disappointments that Cornwallis burned Jefferson's barns at Elk Hill, destroyed the growing crops, laid waste the fields, and cut the throats of all horses too young to be carried off. As he marched from Elk Hill down the James to Williamsburgh, he plundered all the dwelling-houses. The Americans reckoned that he did three millions' worth of damage in Virginia, in that short summer, before he went into the trap of Yorktown. The wonder is, not that we had so few "friends," but that we had one, in Virginia.

And now Washington's plan began to work. On June 8

[1] "By the cautious wording of Gen. Clinton's despatches, and the little notice taken of the General in those of Admiral Arbuthnot to the Board of Admiralty, some people have supposed that the harmony which should always subsist between the land and sea officers employed on the same service, is not so perfect as could be wished between those two great officers."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, October, 1780.

Clinton wrote to Cornwallis, enclosing copies of some "intercepted letters," by which Cornwallis will see that "we are threatened with a siege" in New York. The letters were from Washington to Sullivan and Lafayette, and informed these Generals that it had been resolved to concentrate efforts on New York. One of them, dated May 31, spoke of a conference with Rochambeau. All idea of a Southern campaign had been given up, as they had not the command of the water. They were also influenced by the approaching heats, the long march—and, on the other hand, the tolerably certain prospect of expelling the British from New York, or by their attack obliging them to withdraw their force from the South. The letters said it was rumoured that the British meant to abandon New York altogether—if so "we must follow them," as they will only do so to secure the Southern States, and by holding them perhaps make them the means of an advantageous negotiation for peace.

These letters threw Clinton into a panic—even though he had just heard that the Pennsylvania line had revolted again. He wrote for his men—Cornwallis could certainly spare 2000, "and the sooner the better"; unless Cornwallis means to move to Baltimore—and even then Clinton supposes he can "spare us something." From all the intercepted letters he has seen, he is certain the enemy will attack New York. They have plenty of men for it—a commissary's intercepted letter shows there are at least 8000 at West Point, and "they are coming in very fast." He begs Cornwallis to send "a runner" every week, whether there is important news or not. And as he is now so near he need not send his despatches immediately to the Minister.[1]

On the 11th he writes again for the troops.[2] Since Leslie's expedition in October last, inclusive, he has detached 7724 effectives into the Chesapeak; and when your Lordship made the junction there, Phillips had 5304, "a force I should have hoped would have been sufficient of itself to have carried on operations in any of the southern provinces of America"— where, as appears by the intercepted letters of Washington, they are in no situation to stand against even a division of the British. He does not think Lafayette can have more than 1000 Continentals;

[1] "I began to feel the bad Effects of the permission I had so liberally given his Lordship to report directly to the Minister."—*Clinton's Note.*

[2] Two battalions of Light Infantry, 43rd; 76th or 80th; two battalions of Anspach; Queen's Rangers, cavalry and infantry; Remains of the 17th Light Dragoons; and such artillery as he can spare, "particularly men."

and he has been told by a loyalist that a fortnight ago he met the Pennsylvania line at Frederickstown, and they were so discontented their officers were afraid to trust them with ammunition. You have opposed to you from 1500 to 2000 Continentals, and—as Lafayette himself says—a small body of ill-armed peasantry, full as spiritless as the militia of the Southern provinces. "My present effective force is only 1931"—and the enemy can get up to 20,000, besides the French, and "the numerous militia of the five neighbouring provinces." He is sure Cornwallis will see that the sooner he himself concentrates his force the better. So—unless he will adopt "my ideas" respecting a move to Baltimore or the Delaware Neck—he begs that as soon as he has finished any active operations he may be engaged in, Cornwallis will send him the troops of which he encloses a list—and in the order on the list.

For the rest, he dissents as to the manner in which a second army—if he had it to spare—should be employed. Experience ought to convince us that order cannot be restored in any rebellious province on this Continent, "without the hearty assistance of numerous friends." These, I think, are not to be found in Virginia; "I dare not assert that they are to be found in great numbers anywhere else, or that their exertions when found will answer our expectations; but there is a better chance of finding them in Pennsylvania than in any, except the Southern provinces." In these your lordship has made the experiment, and it has failed.[1] Only Pennsylvania remains, and if I continue in the command, I am determined to give it a fair trial. As for thinking that "a desultory move" against Philadelphia will do more harm than good, I cannot agree with you. The principal stores for the campaign are there, an immense quantity of European and West India commodities, and "no inconsiderable supply of money, which their uninterrupted trade and cruisers have lately procured them." From these funds they are now forming a bank by subscription—if it succeeds, it may give fresh vigour to their cause. If we could now seize these important magazines, and "overset their schemes, and break up their public credit," the favourable consequences are too obvious to mention.

On the 15th he writes again—apparently in haste. "Without assigning any reason," the Admiral has thought proper to

[1] Cornwallis had said bitterly: "We never had more than their wishes." They let Gates pass to Hillsborough, after Camden, with a guard of only six men.

stop the sailing of the convoy with stores, which has been waiting for days, ready to sail for the Chesapeak to supply Cornwallis. Again Clinton begs for the troops, "with all possible despatch." On the 19th he sends a much longer letter—if Cornwallis is actually proposing "any solid operation," Clinton will not press for the troops—otherwise he hopes Cornwallis will send all he can spare from "a respectable defensive"—the unhealthy season in the Chesapeak is beginning. And that Cornwallis may know what he means by a respectable defensive, he tells him it is highly probable that de Grasse will visit these coasts "in the hurricane season," and bring troops with him. When he hears you have taken possession of York River, he will most likely go to Rhode Island—and then their first efforts will be in this quarter. But I have no great apprehensions—"for Sir George Rodney seems to have the same suspicions of de Grasse's intentions," and will of course follow him hither. In hopes that Cornwallis will spare him 3000 men he has sent 2000 tons of transport. He also wants "the twenty-four boats built by General Arnold"—the other ten, now building in the Chesapeak, will suffice for Cornwallis. On June 28 he writes more peremptorily. For "essential reasons" he has resolved to make the attempt on Philadelphia. Encloses a new list of vessels, artillery, and horses, and send Lieutenant Sutherland of the Engineers, and entrenching tools for 500 men. Lastly, on July 1, he sends a brief note by the *Orpheus*, ordering the troops to sail forty-eight hours after she should leave the Chesapeak—she is not to return till Cornwallis tells her captain that the troops are on board.

Meantime Cornwallis had crossed the James at Westover, marched to Hanover Court House, and crossed the South Anna—Lafayette marching on his left all the while, at a distance of about twenty miles. Cornwallis next pushed his light troops over the North Anna, alarming Lafayette for his junction with Wayne and the Pennsylvania line. But he found it impossible to prevent the junction, so turned his attention to destroying stores. He then moved by Richmond to Williamsburgh, arriving there on the 25th. He mentions that on this expedition he had destroyed "at different places above 2000 hogsheads of tobacco," and a great number of guns. Wayne and Steuben had now joined Lafayette.

The day after he arrived at Williamsburgh, Cornwallis received Clinton's letters of the 11th and 15th. He did not reply till the 30th—he seems to have used the interval to examine York.

Having seen it, he thought "it far exceeds our power, consistent with your plans, to make safe defensive posts there and at Gloucester"—and both are necessary if the shipping is to be protected. In obedience to Clinton's orders, he was now about to repass the James and go to Portsmouth, there to embark the troops as fast as Clinton's transports come to receive them. He wrote a long letter, full of arguments against the attempt on Philadelphia, against a defensive war in Carolina—in fact, against every one of Clinton's pet plans. But, of course, if an attack on New York is apprehended, the troops must go at once.

Clinton received this letter on July 8, and was thrown into great perturbation by it. Now, if Cornwallis' schemes failed, he would be blamed! He wrote back in haste, reminding him that he had always said *if the troops could be spared.* He never meant to draw a single man from Virginia till Cornwallis had provided "a respectable defensive." He had thought 4000 would have done—Arnold said 2000—but Cornwallis must be the judge. If Yorktown is of importance for securing a harbour for large ships, he is concerned that Cornwallis should so suddenly lose sight of it, and repass the James, and retire to "the sickly post of Portsmouth, where your horses will, I fear, be starved," and a hundred other inconveniences will attend you. Lafayette will seize and fortify York the moment he hears that you have repassed the James.

He then recommends "Old Point Comfort" as "the station you ought to choose" if it will secure Hampton Road.[1]

Cornwallis was writing the same day, to tell Clinton that he had fought a battle at the passage of the James. He had left Williamsburgh on the 4th, and marched to a camp which covered a ford to the island of Jamestown—the river there was three miles wide. The Rangers passed over to the island in the night; next morning the wheel-carriages crossed, and on the 6th the "bat horses" and baggage. About noon that day word was brought that the enemy were approaching, and about four they attacked his outposts. Cornwallis had prepared a stratagem. He had concealed his main body—which his emissaries were assuring the enemy had crossed the river in the night—and placed them in a position covered by ponds and morasses, crossed by a few causeways of logs—all hidden behind a skirt of woods. To keep up the deception, he let his pickets be driven back. The bait took. A little before sunset a body

[1] Clinton justifies his wish for "a place of arms," because Cornwallis could not feed his army without one.

of Continentals, with artillery, began to form in front of his camp. Then Cornwallis ordered the men to advance in two lines, and Wayne with his 800 Pennsylvanians found himself face to face with more than 2000 British. Wayne—whose rashness had earned for him the name of "Mad Anthony"—thought it worse to retreat than to go on—he charged with the Pennsylvanians, horse and foot, and for some minutes there was "a smart action" between him and Dundas' brigade. But Wayne was outnumbered, and was being outflanked, when Lafayette—whose suspicions had been aroused by the heaviness of the British fire—ordered him to fall back. Wayne did so in good order, but had to leave his three cannon behind him, as the horses which drew them were killed.[1]

It was too dark to pursue. Cornwallis puts the enemy's loss at between two and three hundred. Next day he crossed the James—"an operation of great labour and difficulty," on account of its breadth.

Three days after this Clinton wrote to him in cypher that he had received his letter of June 30. If he had not already crossed the James, he was to remain at Williamsburgh—if he had, and thinks it best to return to Williamsburgh, he had better do so—in each case, to wait till he hears again from Clinton. "The troops also are to remain"—if they have sailed, Cornwallis is to call them back. And "the Admiral's and my wish" is, to hold Old Point Comfort at all events—it secures Hampton Road.

In another letter of the same day Clinton explains this more fully. He has had a consultation with Admiral Graves. They are both in favour of a station in Chesapeak for ships of the line; the Admiral is for Hampton Road, and it appears that Old Point Comfort secures it. Clinton begs that Cornwallis will at once examine and fortify the Point, detaining the troops he thinks necessary, and returning the remainder. Graves writes to the same effect; but also thinks York will give the command "of the lower or Elizabeth country," and deprive the rebels of "the two best settled rivers of the Chesapeak," and deter an enemy from entering it, while we command the access to it.

On July 27 Cornwallis writes that he has received the letter (cypher) of July 11, and is detaining the troops. Since then the letters of the 8th and 11th have come. In that of the 8th Clinton blamed him for repassing the James in such a hurry. But he was told New York was threatened. At the same time,

[1] Of this action Clinton generously says: "Lord Cornwallis has the more merit as He had before informed me He should draw Lafayette into this scrape."

he was told to fortify Williamsburgh, or York. It would require much time and labour to fortify York and Gloucester, meanwhile New York was in danger, and he did not feel at liberty to detain the troops. As soon as he had repassed the James, he received the despatch informing him of the intended attempt on Philadelphia, and urging the return of the troops. All this he did "with the utmost exertion and alacrity," and must acknowledge he was not prepared to receive in the next despatch a severe censure on his conduct. He has now examined Old Point Comfort, and finds it will not do at all—he encloses Sutherland's report, and the opinion of the Captains of the King's ships now lying in Hampton Road.

Lieutenant Sutherland and the four Captains[1] say that Old Point Comfort is so very short a distance from deep water, that it must soon be destroyed by a naval attack; and the channel is so wide and deep that ships could pass the fort with very little risk. "I apprehend 1500 yards is too great a distance for batteries to stop ships," says Sutherland. And the Captains say the same. Therefore Cornwallis, "in obedience to your Excellency's orders," will seize and fortify York and Gloucester, "being the only harbour in which we can hope to give effectual protection to line of battle ships." He will also evacuate Portsmouth as soon as possible—till that is done, he cannot possibly spare any troops. "For York and Gloucester, from their situation, command no country; and a superiority in the field will not only be necessary to enable us to draw forage and other supplies from the country, but likewise to carry on our works without interruption."

So Cornwallis walked into the trap. He had succeeded in finding "a bad post," in a country "not really in our possession."

Clinton was very angry with Cornwallis even before this letter came. He had received a very long remonstrance from Cornwallis on his letter of May 29, and he begins by repeating all he had then said on the consequences of the retreat to Wilmington. He was just as little pleased with what Cornwallis had done since he came to Virginia. His instructions to Phillips gave him a power to make Yorktown, or Old Point Comfort, a station for ships—if the Admiral thought we wanted one, and disapproved of Portsmouth. Simcoe's description of York made Arnold think it could be defended with 2000 men. He was above all irritated by Cornwallis hinting that he had not always been so eager for "a station"—he fills pages with extracts from his own letters

[1] Captains Hudson, Symonds, Everett, and Dundas.

to show he always was. He persists in blaming Cornwallis for repassing the James without waiting to receive an answer to his despatch of June 28; and Cornwallis persists in respectfully replying that he is blamed for obeying the Commander-in-Chief's orders.

On July 25 Clinton had to write a dismal despatch to Germaine. Nothing had been heard from Rawdon, but Cornwallis had heard a report that the siege of Ninety-Six was raised, and Greene retreating. Meanwhile West Florida was lost. In April Balfour had written to say that the Spanish fleet had arrived at Pensacola in March, an army of 2000 men had landed on Rosas Island, and the ships of war were cannonading the works on Red Rocks.[1] Now Clinton had to report that General Campbell's aide had arrived with despatches relating the surrender of Pensacola and the British possessions in Florida to the arms of Spain, on the 8th of May. The garrison had marched out with the honours of war, and were to go to a British port, but not to Augustine or Jamaica, and not to serve again till exchanged. Clinton then mentions some curious movements of the enemy, who seem to have been reconnoitring the British lines. And Admiral Graves has sailed very suddenly, no one knows where or why. Altogether a letter disquieting to any Secretary but George Germaine.

There are passages in these despatches which let in floods of light on the interior history of the war. Germaine appears in them as a somewhat cocksure person—always affecting a sanguine view of things; while Clinton stubbornly puts the dark side before him, shows him that the successes are not all they seem, and, above all, that "friends" are almost as much of an anxiety and a charge as a help. Germaine's despatch of March 7, 1781, written in the glow of hope kindled by the revolt of the Pennsylvania line, irritated Clinton past endurance. Among other over-confident remarks, Germaine said that the Rebel Force in all parts was "now so very contemptible," and our superiority "so vast," that no resistance need be apprehended; "and it is a pleasing though at the same time a mortifying reflection when the Duration of the Rebellion is considered, which arises from the View of the Return of the Provincial Forces you have transmitted, that the American Levies in The

[1] A few months later he wrote still more despairingly on the general situation. "The revolt is universal—the minds of the people bent on their former principles, and the efforts of friends feeble and pusillanimous."—*Col. Balfour from Charlestown*, July, 1781. *Hist. MSS. Royal Inst. Papers*, ii. 303.

King's Service are more in number than the whole of the Inlisted Troops in the Service of the Congress." To this Clinton replied (July 18) that his return had given the Provincial forces as 8168, of whom only 4300 were fit for duty, and not two-thirds of these acting against the Rebel force; whereas Washington had at least 9400 in all, "taking him in his most reduced state," that is, after the revolt of the Pennsylvania line. Clinton had long been saying that he or "the Good Old Admiral" must go.[1] "From Age, Temper, and Inconsistency of Conduct," Vice-Admiral Arbuthnot was so little to be depended on that in continuing to serve with him, Clinton would be always afraid of the miscarriage of the enterprises they engaged in. It had come to Germaine sending a message to Clinton, written in the third person, recommending Sir Henry Clinton either to "remain in good Humour," or to avail himself of leave to come home. But as soon as Clinton seemed going to take him at his word, Germaine characteristically began to cry small, and apologise, assuring Clinton of his confidence, and begging him to wait a very little—for Arbuthnot was really going now; and positively requesting Clinton not to resign to Cornwallis.[2]

On the 11th of August Clinton writes joyfully to say that "the fleet from Bremer-lehe" is come this day with 2500 German recruits. He hopes that before this Cornwallis will have established himself on the Williamsburgh Neck, so far as to be able to spare some troops—Captain Hudson will help to forward them. And if they have not sailed already, he hopes the Rangers may be the second corps sent, and as many of Arnold's boats, and artillerymen and stores, as Cornwallis can spare. And as Cornwallis has three engineers, he begs he may have Lieutenant Sutherland. "The French and rebels shewed themselves the other day in front of our lines to the amount of eleven thousand." A curious passage closes this letter: "A man goes hence through the country[3] to your Lordship with a proposal to liberate the Convention troops—for which he says he will only want a frigate and some transports to receive them. Lest any accident should happen to the runner that carries this, a duplicate of it is sent by him in cypher."

[1] "A fine brave superannuated old Gentleman who saw heard and acted by his Secretary and this Secty is here, Supercargo of an American East Indiaman Lord Sandwich at last consented to his removal."—Clinton's Note, *Clinton-Cornwallis Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 46.

[2] Germaine to Clinton, July 7th, 1781.

[3] "Through the country"—that is, not by sea, as all the despatches went. "The runner" was the packet which carried despatches.

Next day Cornwallis writes his first letter to Clinton from York. He embarked the 80th in boats, and went himself on board at Richmond very early on the morning of the 29th, but the winds were so contrary that they were four days getting to Gloucester, where they landed on the night of the 1st of August, and the troops, which came in transports, next day. The works on the Gloucester side "are in some forwardness"[1]—he hopes could resist a sudden attack. O'Hara is evacuating Portsmouth as fast as he can, and as soon as he arrives "I will send to New York every man I can spare."[2]

The harassed Commander-in-Chief in New York was destined to another disappointment. On August 16 Cornwallis writes that he did not imagine his letter of July 26th would have made his Excellency so sanguine as to hope he could spare any troops. The evacuation of Portsmouth is not completed—and with every exertion will not be till the 21st or 22nd. Our whole labour has been bestowed on the Gloucester side, but (after great fatigue to the troops) he does not think that for some time to come they will be safe from a "*Coup de Main*," with less than a thousand men. It is very difficult to construct works at this season of the year, and the plan for fortifying York is not entirely settled—he does not know whether he can spare any troops at all, or if any, how soon. But when the Portsmouth garrison arrives, and the Engineer has finished his plan, he will send Clinton "a report of the State of things here," and take his Excellency's commands. He asks that vessels may be warned not to go into Portsmouth harbour, now it is evacuated.

Clinton's feelings on being offered a "report of the state of things at Yorktown," when asking for troops for New York, may be more easily imagined than described. Moreover, Graves had returned, and said he was ready. "I told him I was: in answer to mine he says two of his ships require some repair." (Clinton's Note.)

Cornwallis continued to argue the point with Clinton, as to his repassing of the James, without waiting for the next despatch; and on the 22nd he announced the arrival of the Portsmouth garrison.[3] But, alas! Clinton was no nearer getting the troops

[1] Clinton's note asks "why he fortfyed the Commanded side Gloucester before the Commanding side York. If he had begun on the York side the works would have been compleat before the French arrived."

[2] "Not a man did he send."

[3] A great number of loyalist refugees from the Counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Princess Ann, accompanied O'Hara.

back—Cornwallis says it will take at least six weeks to complete the fortifications, and requests his Excellency to decide whether it is more important that a detachment of 1000 or 1200 men should be sent to New York, or that the works here should be expedited. By last accounts, Lafayette was in the Fork of Pamunkey and Matapuny, expecting to be joined by Smallwood, Wayne, and Morgan. Cornwallis says he wants more heavy guns, "and many other artillery and engineer's stores"; and it is right to mention that there are about 600 stand of spare arms in the Chesapeak—also that our consumption of provisions is considerably increased by the number of refugees, and by the negroes employed in public services.

The toils were closing very fast now. Letters began to miscarry—several of Clinton's did not reach Cornwallis, notably one of August 27, in which he says that the enemy "foraged" within six miles of the New York lines on the 17th, that he made a small movement on the 18th, and the enemy fell back on the 19th, passed the Croton, and afterwards crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry, and are now encamped at Chatham. Clinton cannot understand this movement—thinks possibly Mr. Washington may mean to "detach to the southward." He therefore agrees to Cornwallis keeping all the troops. He will also send a few recruits, convalescents, etc.—all he can spare, as this "may be only a feint," and they may return, and will certainly do so if de Grasse comes. Towards the latter end of next month, "when the effects of the equinox are over (for I am persuaded the Admiral will not approve of any water movements till then)," if not threatened, he will reinforce the Chesapeak.[1]

On the 28th Sir Samuel Hood arrived at New York from the Leeward Islands with fourteen sail of the line, three frigates and a fire-ship, and the 40th and 69th Regiments. On the evening of the same day Clinton received undoubted intelligence that de Barras' fleet sailed from Rhode Island on the 25th, "their destination unknown." Washington still at Chatham. Even now, Clinton did not suspect the truth.

Throughout these last months of the war, everyone on the British side was expecting the enemy to do something he did not intend, and was sure that the enemy could not possibly do the thing he did intend. The Admirals thought the French could

[1] Clinton's Despatch of August 30. "This letter was to have gone with General Leslie, but stopt on hearing of the French Fleet." Leslie was going to take the command in Carolina, in place of Rawdon, going home on sick leave. (See p. 926.)

not even block York River—"much less both passages of the Chesapeak." Clinton was certain Washington would not go to Virginia. When he did go, Clinton had no idea "they could bring such a powerful battering train as to demolish Cornwallis' works in so short a time."[1]

Before Washington moved from New Windsor[2] one of those savage little affairs happened which go far to explain the persistent refusal of the Americans to pardon the loyalists. De Lancey's Loyalists—a band of loyalists and refugees—were carrying on a petty warfare with the American outposts. De Lancey's Horse and Rangers scoured the country, foraging for the army in New York—they were so little to be distinguished from bandits that they were sometimes spoken of as "Cow-boys." They now planned to surprise the American outpost at Pin's Bridge, on the Croton River. Colonel Christopher Greene commanded this post. With 100 horse and 200 foot De Lancey forded the Croton at daybreak, just as the night-guard had been withdrawn, and surprised the farmhouses in which the Americans were quartered. They first of all surrounded that in which Greene was. The door of Greene's room was burst open. He defended himself vigorously with his sword—he was a man of great physical strength, but he was overpowered by numbers, cut down, and barbarously mangled. The whole affair was a massacre. In excuse, it was said that De Lancey[3] himself was not present, but remained on the south side of the Croton, to secure the retreat. Greene died before his captors had carried him a mile. As they passed the farmhouses, the party told the people that if there was an enquiry for the Colonel, they had left him dead at the edge of the woods. Greene was a gallant soldier—he followed Arnold on the march to Canada, fought at Quebec, and on the Delaware, and was remembered for the extreme kindness he had shown to the dying Donop. His corpse was brought to headquarters, and buried with military honours. This story is no isolated instance—it is only remembered so long because Greene was so especially beloved.

Washington was not foraging. He had broken up the camp at White Plains, and was marching—whither?

As the time approached, he had left nothing undone to deceive

[1] A note says, "I never dreamed that Washington had the least hopes of a superior fleet in the Chesapeak, so never thought he would venture anything there. How could I think it? And if I had, how could I have prevented it?"

[2] New Windsor was just above the Highlands, a few miles from West Point.

[3] De Lancey had succeeded the unhappy André as Adjutant-General.

his enemy. To keep up the illusion of an attack on New York, an encampment was marked out on the Jersey shore, and ovens were built, and fuel provided, as if to feed the division of an army. It was made to look like a descent on Staten Island. Washington's own army was as much deceived as Clinton—Washington always used to say that the best way to be sure you had concealed your design from the enemy was to try to conceal it from your own men. "Where the imposition does not take at home, it will never sufficiently succeed abroad." He cleared the roads leading towards King's Bridge, as though the posts there were to be attempted; and on the 19th of August the troops were paraded in this direction. But when all seemed ready, they faced about, and marched up along the Hudson River road towards King's Ferry. Rochambeau also broke up his camp, and went by White Plains and North Castle towards the same point. "All Westchester County was again alive with the tramp of troops, the gleam of arms, and the lumbering of artillery and baggage waggons along its roads."

On the 20th Washington began to cross the Hudson at King's Ferry. He encamped that night at Haverstraw, and wrote to Lafayette, telling him for the first time that he was coming. He also wrote to de Grasse, urging him to have all the transports and frigates ready at Head of Elk by the 8th of September, to carry him and his army. He told Lafayette that de Barras would join him in the Chesapeak.

On the 22nd the French began to cross to Stony Point. By the 25th both armies were safely over Hudson, and began the march south—Clinton still believing that they meant Staten Island They had been marching a day or two before he realised that they were really gone. Meanwhile Washington's officers were betting high on what was to happen—was it the siege of New York, and were they to encamp by those ovens—or was it Virginia?

As the army passed one post after another, it became clear that it was Virginia. They were pushing on fast for Philadelphia, the knapsacks carried in waggons to lighten the march.

Washington had passed the Delaware before Clinton understood. It was too late then to stop him, even if there had been the troops to do it with.

Washington and his suite arrived in Philadelphia on the 30th, "and alighted at the city tavern amidst enthusiastic crowds"—who, however, wondered why he had come. It was to get a little money.

The northern regiments did not like going to Virginia, and Washington thought it might be as well to pay them something on account—they had had no pay for a long time. Rochambeau lent him "twenty thousand hard dollars," which Mr. Morris promised to repay by the 1st of October. (On the 25th Colonel John Laurens had come back from France, with two and a half million livres in cash—part of the subsidy of six millions granted by the King of France.)

On the 2nd of September, the American army marched through Philadelphia. They were still very dusty and rather ragged, but it was a very different march from that on almost the same day, four years ago, just before Brandywine. Next day the French passed through—splendid in "white uniforms faced with green." And now Washington heard from Lafayette that he was preparing to cut off Cornwallis' retreat, in case he tried to escape into Carolina.

De Grasse arrived in the Chesapeak on the 28th of August—three days before Graves sailed from Long Island to keep him out. An hour after the French and American troops reached the Head of Elk, they received de Grasse's express to say he was there. Meanwhile de Barras had made the circuit of Bermuda, for fear of being intercepted by the British fleet; he carried a precious freight—ten of his transports had on board the heavy ordnance for the siege of Yorktown.

As soon as de Grasse arrived, after blocking York River, he took possession of the James with his cruisers, for a good way up, to prevent Cornwallis retreating on Carolina, and also to cover the boats that were to take St. Simon and his troops eighteen leagues up the river, to join Lafayette.

Washington left Philadelphia on the 5th—the day Graves was fighting de Grasse. A little after he passed Chester he received the news that de Grasse was in the Chesapeak with twenty-eight sail of the line. He rode back to Chester to tell Rochambeau. Next came the news that the 3000 troops under St. Simon had landed and were already in touch with Lafayette.

When Washington reached the Head of Elk on the 6th of September, the troops and stores were already beginning to embark. There was a slight delay—the destruction of every kind of water-craft by the British had left few vessels for transport; so part of the force went to Baltimore by land. Baltimore was illuminated the night that Washington arrived there. On the 9th he left the town soon after daybreak, with none of his suite but Colonel Humphreys—he was determined to see Mount Vernon

once more. It was six years since he was there—six years of what toils, what anxieties and dangers! He got there late. Next day his suite and the Comte de Rochambeau arrived, and were shown a glimpse of the old Virginian hospitality. And on the 12th Washington set out for the last great struggle.

CHAPTER CVII

DE GRASSE IN THE CHESAPEAK

(Duplicate.) "YORK in VIRGINIA, 31*st August*, 1781.

"SIR,—A French Ship of the Line, with two Frigates, and the *Loyalist*, which they have taken, lay at the Mouth of this River.

"A Lieutenant of the *Charon*, who went with an escort of Dragoons to Old Point Comfort, reports, that there are between 30 and 40 Sail within the Capes, mostly Ships of War, and some of them very large.—I have the honour to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"CORNWALLIS.

"His Excellency Sir HENRY CLINTON, K.B., etc. etc."

"1*st Sept.* 1781.

"An enemy's fleet within the Capes, between thirty and forty ships of war, mostly large.—CORNWALLIS."

(Written in Cypher on a Congress Note.)

(In Cypher.) "YORK in VIRGINIA, 2*nd September*, 1781.

"SIR,—Comte de Grasse's fleet is within the Capes of the Chesapeak. Forty boats with troops went up James river yesterday; and four ships lie at the entrance of this river.—I have the honour to be, etc. CORNWALLIS."

(In Cypher.) "NEW-YORK, *Sept.* 2, 1781.

"MY LORD,—By intelligence which I have this day received, it would seem that Mr. Washington is moving an army to the southward, with an appearance of haste, and gives out that he expects the co-operation of a considerable French armament. Your Lordship, however, may be assured, that if this should be the case, I shall either endeavour to reinforce the army under your command by all the means within the compass of my power, or make every possible diversion in your favour."—*Clinton to Cornwallis.*

AND now the bolt fell.

These letters crossed each other—Cornwallis' not reaching New York till the morning of the 4th of September. Clinton's, of the 2nd, said that Captain Stanhope, H.M.S. *Pegasus*, just arrived from the West Indies, reported being chased "on Friday last, in lat. 38 deg. about sixty leagues from the coast," by eight ships of the line, which he took to be French, and one of the victuallers under his convoy had counted upwards of forty sail more. However, as Admiral Graves and Sir Samuel Hood, with 19 sail of the line and 50 gunships, had sailed on the 31st, he flattered himself Cornwallis had little to apprehend.

But the news appeared to him serious, and Cornwallis' position insecure. When (on the 4th) Clinton learned that the French were actually in the Bay, he cast about what to do. A diversion seemed the best expedient, and the quickest way of making a diversion was to send Arnold to do what mischief he could in Connecticut. It is true that Connecticut lay to the north, and the danger was in the south—but news of a raid there might stop Washington's march. So Arnold was hurried off the very next day. He set out from Long Island, and stood for New London, about ten leagues off. At one on the morning of the 6th he arrived off the harbour, but the wind suddenly shifted, and his transports could not get in till nine. An hour later the troops were landed, and marched in two divisions, one on each side of the harbour. That on the Croton side consisted of the 40th and 54th, the 3rd Battalion of the New Jersey Volunteers, some Yagers, and artillery. Lieut.-Colonel Eyre led them. Arnold himself led the other, on the New London side—it was made up of the 38th, the Loyal Americans, the American Legion, some refugees, and some Yagers.

It was about three miles to the town, and on the way Arnold detached some companies to attack Fort Trumbull—which commanded the harbour—while he himself attacked a redoubt that was firing on his force. The redoubt was evacuated as they approached, and soon after Arnold "had the pleasure to see Captain Millet march into Fort Trumbull under a shower of grape-shot." The Fort was carried, and Arnold went on to New London. There the people had been hard at work since the first alarm, trying to get the privateers and other vessels up Norwich River, out of reach; but the wind was small, and the tide adverse, and they were obliged to anchor.

On the way Arnold had information that Fort Griswold, on the Croton side, could easily be taken, as the works were unfinished, and most of the inhabitants were on board the ships, trying to save their property. He therefore sent Eyre to take it. On gaining a height behind New London, however, he found Fort Griswold much more formidable than he expected from what he had heard—the men who had escaped from Fort Trumbull had crossed in boats and thrown themselves into it—and a favourable wind springing up just then, the ships were escaping up stream, so Arnold countermanded the order to take Fort Griswold.[1]

[1] The order arrived too late—the Fort had been taken "after a most obstinate defence of near 40 minutes," in which Eyre was wounded, and Major Montgomery killed. Eighty-five men were found dead in Fort Griswold, and

After this he burned New London—"ten or twelve ships, among them three or four armed vessels, and one loaded with naval stores; an immense quantity of European and West India goods were found in the stores; among the former the cargo of the *Hannah*, Captain Watson, from London, lately captured by the enemy; the whole of which was burnt with the stores, which proved to contain a large quantity of powder, unknown to us; the explosion of the powder, and change of wind, soon after the stores were fired, communicated the flames to part of the town, which was, notwithstanding every effort to prevent it, unfortunately destroyed." Thus Arnold endeavours to minimise the enormity of leading an expedition against a town in his native State, and destroying the property of many who must have been personally known to him; and perhaps of permitting worse barbarity still—for the American account, referring to the carnage at Fort Griswold, says that "the truly amiable, heroic, and brave Colonel Ledyard repulsed the enemy three times," and "with several other officers, and worthy citizens, fell victims to the enemy, contrary, as it is said, to the most rigid rules of war." It is, however, only fair to add that this account supposes that nearly 80 of Arnold's force were killed. The damage was enormous. "58 dwelling-houses, 56 stores, the episcopal church, court-house, gaol, and about 22 sail vessels," were destroyed. The loss was supposed to be several hundred thousand pounds.

It was Arnold's last exploit. For some reason or other, after this he took no active part in the campaign. The British officers had just grace enough left to dislike serving under a traitor, even though that traitor had only betrayed rebels. Clinton, who was on good terms with him, was yet so determined not to leave him a moment in the chief command in Virginia, that on Phillips' death he was sending General Robertson—then Governor of New York, an experienced officer, but almost too old for service—to take over the command. But Cornwallis reached Virginia six days after Phillips' death, and Clinton recalled Robertson. Arnold seems to have acquiesced—even his nerve must have quailed at the certainty of being strung up to the nearest tree if one of the thousand chances of war delivered him into the hands of his outraged countrymen. He disappears from America in the flames and smoke of New London, to reappear beside the throne of King George the Third.

The burning of New London was of no use. That very day

about sixty others wounded, most of them mortally. Arnold's own loss was, by his own account, "very considerable."

Graves was fighting de Grasse in the mouth of the Chesapeak, and Cornwallis' fate was sealed.

The more we study the details of these events, the more plainly we see the utter inadequacy of the forces which were sent to reconquer America. A blow was struck in one place only at the cost of relinquishing a post somewhere else. As soon as Rochambeau moved from Rhode Island, Clinton and Graves considered the possibility of recovering it, and Graves spent some days cruising off Boston — precious time, whose loss Clinton bitterly laments.[1] Graves returned to his station on Long Island on August 16, and Clinton was preparing to embark 3000 troops for the attempt, when Graves discovered that the *Robuste* and *Prudente* were practically *hors de combat*, and must be repaired. They were not ready on the 28th, when Hood arrived. Clinton conferred with both Admirals that day, but then came news that de Barras had sailed, and all thought of Rhode Island had to be given up, and every nerve strained to keep the French out of the Chesapeak. Up to the very instant of learning that de Grasse was within the Capes with thirty-six sail of the line, Clinton, on the assurances of Rodney and Hood, believed that de Grasse's ships were "crazy," and that not more than ten or twelve of them were sufficiently seaworthy to go to the Chesapeak.

There still remained one chance—Graves might even now save Cornwallis by a great naval victory. When he sailed on the 31st, he hoped to intercept either de Barras or de Grasse before the one could join the other. The ships were buoyed over the Bar, and the whole fleet stood away to the southward.

They were approaching the mouth of Chesapeak Bay on the morning of September 5th, when the advanced ship made the signal of a fleet in sight. And soon they could see a number of ships at anchor, off Lynne Haven, just within the Chesapeak. Their line extended across the entrance of the Bay, from Cape Henry to the great shoal called the Middle Ground; they had a frigate cruising off the Cape, which stood in as the British approached, and the whole French fleet got under sail, and stretched out to sea, "with the wind at N.N.E." As he drew nearer, Graves formed his line—first, ahead, and then so as to bring his ships nearly parallel with the enemy's line of approach; and when the British van was advanced as far as the shoal of the Middle Ground allowed, he "wore the fleet, and brought the ships upon the same

[1] "Thus was lost an opportunity of making the most important attempt that had offered the whole war."—*Clinton's Narrative.*

tack with the enemy, and nearly parallel, though we were by no means extended with their rear." As soon as he thought his van could operate, Graves made the signal to bear away and approach, and, soon after, to engage the enemy close. Somewhat after four the action became general,[1] as far as the second ship from the centre towards the rear. The enemy's van bore away, to enable their centre to support them, or they would have been cut up. "The action did not entirely cease till a little after sunset, though at a considerable distance, for the centre of the enemy continued to bear up as it advanced, and at that moment seemed to have little more in view than to shelter their own van as it went away before the wind."

Graves puts his own fleet at 19, and says that the French formed their line with 24. Four others were blockading the James and York Rivers, and 1500 of de Grasse's seamen were taking St. Simon's troops up the James, to besiege Yorktown.

So far, this "distant action" was entirely indecisive. Graves was quite right in thinking that de Grasse did not want a close action. That most able and gallant Commander was there, not to obtain a naval victory, but to hold the mouth of the Chesapeak, and so prevent reinforcements from reaching Cornwallis. A victory which crippled his ships, as he crippled those of Graves, might have been fatal to this object.

The nearness of the shore, and the danger of getting on the great shoal of the Middle Ground, greatly hampered the action, but was more inconvenient to Graves than to de Grasse.

After nightfall Graves sent the frigates round the fleet, "to push forward the line, and keep it extended with the enemy, with a full intention to renew the action in the morning." But when the *Fortuné* returned from the van, she reported that several of the ships had suffered so much that they were in no condition to fight again till they had secured their masts. So the fleets continued all the 6th in sight of each other, repairing damages. Rear-Admiral Drake shifted his flag into the *Alcide*, until the *Princessa*[2] had got up another maintopmast. The *Shrewsbury*, whose captain had lost a leg, and had his first lieutenant killed, was obliged to reef both topmasts, and shift her topsail-yards, and was very much damaged. The *Intrepid* had both her topsail-

[1] "Among the headmost ships pretty close."—Despatch of Admiral Graves of September 9th, given in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1781.

[2] The foreign names of many ships will be observed. As has been mentioned, the Navy had been allowed to fall so low that but for the captures made by Rodney the British fleet could not have fought these actions at all.

yards shot down, her topmasts were in great danger of falling, and her lower masts much damaged—"her Captain having behaved with the greatest gallantry to cover the *Shrewsbury*." The *Montagu* was in great danger of losing her masts. The *Terrible*[1] had all her pumps going, and the *Ajax* was also very leaky. Having thus five sail of the line fewer to start with, Graves now had several more unfit for action, and one on the point of sinking.

"The enemy having advanced very much in the wind upon us during the day," Graves determined to tack, after eight o'clock, to prevent being drawn too far from the Chesapeak—and to stand to northwards. He praises his officers and "people," who "all exerted themselves exceedingly." On the 8th it came on to blow "pretty fresh," and presently the *Terrible* made a signal of distress. Graves sent the *Fortuné* and *Orpheus* to her, and on the 10th a Council of War determined to evacuate and destroy her. "I took the first calm day to do it." At the same time Graves distributed water and provisions. The destruction of the unfortunate *Terrible* took up the whole of the 11th—when she was empty, "the wreck was set fire to"; and Graves bore up for the Chesapeak at about nine at night.

The fleets had now been in sight of each other for five days, "and at times were very near." The British "had not speed enough, in so mutilated a state," to attack; and the French showed no inclination to renew, "for they generally maintained the wind of us, and had it often in their power." Graves sent Captain Adam Duncan[2] to reconnoitre the Chesapeak—he reported that the French fleet was all anchored within the Cape, blocking the passage. Graves called a Council, at which it was debated whether it were not wiser to return to New York, before the equinoctial gales were upon them—they were in no case to outride stormy weather. At New York they could refit quickly, and be ready to fight again. As it would have been sheer madness to fight in their present state, the Council voted for return, and by September 20 Graves was back at New York.

On the 9th Clinton had received a letter from Graves, to tell him the French were absolute masters of the Chesapeak, and

[1] "We felt severely the danger of keeping coppered line of battle ships long out without looking at their bottoms, as the *Terrible*, one of the finest seventy-fours we had, by her exceeding bad state even before she left the West Indies, and by the firing of her own guns, etc."—*Lord Robert Manners to the Duke of Rutland*, Resolution, September 27, 1781.

[2] Afterwards Lord Camperdown.

immediately called a Council to determine whether to send the 4000 troops already embarked, or to wait to hear from Graves that the coast was clear of the French.[1] The Council was unanimous for waiting—at any rate till Admiral Digby arrived. Digby was at that moment off the Hook, unable to get over the New York Bar. He brought with him only three ships of the line!

As soon as Graves returned, he began to refit in all haste.[2] The action of the 5th was much criticised—as was but natural, considering what depended on it. Great blame fell on Rodney for letting de Grasse "go all through the West India seas uninterrupted." It was said that if he had instantly pursued with the whole fleet, only touching at Jamaica to take up Parker, the squadron already at New York would have given him so decided a superiority that de Grasse must have abandoned the coasts of America, or been defeated at sea. Why, it was asked, must Rodney go to England just then, and take the best ship in the fleet with him? (the *Cambridge*.) But this was a trifle, compared with the arrangement he made—frittering away his fleet into small detachments, without an object. Instead of drawing ships from Jamaica (then in no danger), he sent three ships of the line there; and left others in the Leeward Islands, where also they were not wanted then. Even the sending of a convoy to Europe ought to have been deferred till Virginia was subdued. Finally, he sent Hood with an inadequate force to meet de Grasse, and so led to the catastrophe.

To this it was replied that Rodney's health obliged him to return; that the defence of the Chesapeak could not have been committed to a better officer than Hood; and that though the *Cambridge* was "a prime ship, and a capital sailer," she was so out of repair as to be unfit for service—particularly, "the iron part of her rudder" was worn out. Finally, there was every reason to suppose de Grasse would send most of his fleet to France, as his ships were many of them "in so crazy a state." Then they went into "ifs"—if Graves had met Hood at the Chesapeak, as was expected, he would have been there before de Grasse. But Graves, by his unfortunate cruise before Boston, not only lost time, but let his fleet be injured by bad weather—thus losing more time. It was this, and not the not joining Hood,

[1] Until he received Graves' letter of the 9th, Clinton says he "took for granted" that our fleet was superior.

[2] "From the damages and wants of all our ships, and the total emptiness of all the store-houses, I cannot even guess when we shall be ready."—*Lord Robert Manners to the Duke of Rutland.*

which did the mischief. It was admitted that they had no timely notice at New York of de Grasse's movements—but this was because all Rodney's expresses were taken by the enemy,[1] while de Grasse always got information of every movement of Rodney's fleet.

[1] Rodney, in his defence of himself in the House, next December, repeated all these reasons for the catastrophe.

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CHAPTER CVIII

THE SIEGE OF YORKTOWN

". . . I must have leave to repeat; that your conduct and Councils did, in the first instance contribute to the catastrophe which terminated the unfortunate Campaign 1781; His Majesty's Cabinet had also their share; and the Admiral in the West Indies His great very great share."—*Sir Henry Clinton's Note to Earl Cornwallis' Answer.*

". . . I never could have the most distant idea that Mr. Washington had the least hope of a superior fleet in the Chesapeak; and I consequently never could suppose that he would venture to go there."—*Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative.*

WHILE waiting for the result of the great sea-fight, Clinton wrote to Cornwallis on the 6th of September that, as de Grasse had got into the Chesapeak, and there was no doubt Washington was marching "with at least 6000 French and Rebel Troops against you, I think the best way to relieve you is to join you as soon as possible, with all the Force that can be spared from hence." They are already embarked, and will proceed as soon as Clinton hears from the Admiral that "we may venture." He expects Digby every hour. On the 8th Cornwallis wrote a very disquieting despatch. After repeating the information about the French fleet, and mentioning that firing was heard off the Capes the night of the 4th, the morning and night of the 5th, and morning of the 6th; he says that Washington is said to be expected, and Lafayette is at or near Williamsburgh. "As my works were not in a state of defence,[1] I have taken a strong position[2] out of the town." He was working hard at the redoubts. "The army is not very sickly. Provisions for six weeks. I will be very careful of it."

[1] "How could they be my good Lord in 48 hours; had you not neglected your exterior position and sunken a few transports to stop the channel below you might have been safe till I arrived."

[2] "which Strong Position is the ground he had fortified, and is described in his letter to me of the 22nd august. but though warned by me he was not prepared when the french arrived, he changed his ground and chose a place for what he called his works, on ground commanded by that he quits, which ground never had been examined, or surveyed, nor indeed thought of before the french arrived in chesapeak."—*Clinton's Notes to the Correspondence.*

Cornwallis fortified Yorktown by seven redoubts and six batteries on the land side—all connected by entrenchments. There was also a line of batteries along the river. "The town was flanked on each side by deep ravines and creeks, emptying into York River; their heads, in front of the town, being not more than half a mile apart."[1] He had also outworks, with redoubts strengthened by abattis; field-works mounted with cannon, and trees cut down and left with the branches pointed outward. He had also fortified Gloucester Point; and its batteries, with those of York, commanded the river between them. Ships of war, protected by the guns of the forts, lay in the river, and the channel was obstructed by sunken vessels. Dundas was at Gloucester, with six or seven hundred men. Cornwallis' main army was encamped about Yorktown, within the range of the redoubts and field-works.

Ill news now came apace. Cornwallis' next letter was terrible. Two line-of-battle ships lie at the mouth of York River; Washington is said to have arrived at Williamsburgh. "If I had no hopes of Relief, I would rather risk an Action than defend my half-finished Works;" but, with a prospect of Digby's coming, he does not think himself justified in "putting the fate of the War on so desperate an Attempt." He explains that his provisions will only last out the six weeks if he can "preserve them from Accidents." The cavalry, he fears, must all be lost. "Useless mouths" must be turned out. This dismal letter was dated September 16, and a postscript next day says that Lieutenant Conway, of the *Cormorant*, just exchanged, tells him the Rhode Island squadron has joined de Grasse, and "they have Thirty-six Sail of the Line. This place is in no state of defence. If you cannot relieve us very soon, you must be prepared to hear the Worst."[2]

To the last, Clinton's hope—and Washington's fear—was that Cornwallis would retire on Carolina. This letter arrived on the 23rd, and next day a Council of War was held, of both "Army and Navy officers." It was determined to embark 5000 men and go with twenty-three sail of the line to relieve Yorktown. The same day Admiral Digby came in with his three ships, and Clinton wrote to Cornwallis, "There is every reason to hope we start from hence the 5th October." He begs Cornwallis, "if all is well," to make

[1] Irving's *Life of Washington.*

[2] "From this I began to be Alarmed as his Lordship seems to dispair and I thought he would have beat Lafayette and gone back to S. Carolina."—*Clinton's Note.*

"smokes" as a signal, upon hearing "a considerable firing" towards the entrance of the Chesapeak.[1]

At last Lieutenant Anburey's turn had come—he was exchanged, and arrived in New York on the 25th. That afternoon he went to the beach to see the whaleboat set off with despatches for Cornwallis, and he mentions how "elated" the crew were at the good news they were carrying of Clinton's speedy departure to relieve him. The boat was open—it was a dangerous voyage.

At this very time Germaine was writing to Clinton that he hoped he had been able to execute "that very important plan of taking Philadelphia, and thereby ruining that valuable Trade, which has been lately the Chief support of the Rebellion."

On the 29th of September, at ten at night, Cornwallis was writing to Clinton. The letter was in cypher. It told Clinton that now for two days he had "ventured to look General Washington's whole force in the face in the position outside of my works"; and that there was but one wish in the whole army—that the enemy would advance. Cornwallis' spirits had been raised again by Clinton's letter of the 24th, just received. But despite the desire for the enemy to advance, he had determined to withdraw within his works that very night, lest his left flank should be turned. Clinton said this was giving up to the enemy ground which commanded all the rest of the works.

The combined French and American army appeared before Yorktown on the 28th of September.[2] On the morning of that day the Americans and French marched from Williamsburgh, and bivouacked at night two miles from York. De Choisy was sent across the river with de Lauzun's Legion and Weedon's Militia, to

[1] "Three large separate smokes parallel to it, and, if you possess the post of Gloucester, four." All these despatches were sent in duplicate—many in triplicate, and the more important of them in cypher. It was this despatch that Anburey saw go off in the whaleboat. Anburey could not describe his emotions on reaching King's Bridge, "when we had passed the barrier and felt ourselves free. Our fleet is repairing after the action with the French off Chesapeak Bay, and when ready will take General Clinton to save if possible Lord Cornwallis' army." He could not describe "the eagerness" of both army and navy—especially the navy. They were using the utmost diligence. Prince William Henry (afterwards King William IV) had just arrived in the *Lion*, and had been on shore.

[2] "On the 18th Washington and Rochambeau had visited de Grasse on board the *Ville de Paris*, in Lynne Haven Bay. The vessel which brought them down the James was the little *Queen Charlotte*, just taken, with Lord Rawdon on board of her, going from Charlestown to New York. She had been fitted up for Rawdon, so it was thought she might do for the Generals."—Irving's *Life of Washington*.

watch Gloucester Point. By the 1st of October the besiegers formed a semicircle, each end resting on the river. They "broke ground" on the night of the 30th, and that night, and the two following days and nights, constructed two redoubts, about 1100 yards from Cornwallis' works in the ravine. They now occupied Cornwallis' old position—but greatly strengthened. On the night of October 6th, General Lincoln opened the besiegers' first parallel—"extending from the river to a deep ravine on the left, nearly opposite to the centre of this place," and embracing Cornwallis' whole left at the distance of 600 yards.

Meanwhile, on September 25, Clinton writes to warn Cornwallis that the repairs of the fleet might "lengthen it out a day or two." Send "a trusty person" to each of the Capes about the 7th of next month, with every necessary information respecting the force and situation of the enemy.

Next day (September 30) Clinton writes again. The Admiral now assures him "that we may pass the bar by the 12th of October, if the winds permit, and no unforeseen accident happens." But "this is subject to disappointment—your wishes will of course direct me," and I shall "persist in my idea of a direct move, even to the middle of November," if you think you can hold out so long. "If you tell me you cannot," and I find I cannot arrive in time, I will immediately make an attempt on Philadelphia by land, giving you notice, if possible. "If this should draw any part of Washington's force from you, it may possibly give you an opportunity of doing something to save your army."[1]

On the 3rd of October, Cornwallis replies to Clinton's despatch of the 25th September, "The Enemy are encamped about two miles from us." They broke ground on the night of the 30th, and have made two redoubts about 1100 yards from our works. "I can see no means of forming a junction with me but by York River, and I do not think that any diversion would be of use to us." And all accounts of the French fleet make them 35 or 36 sail of the line.

Cornwallis received that comfortless letter of the 30th September on October 10th—by Major Cochran, who, however, seems to have only carried "the substance" of it. He replied next day, repeating that nothing but a direct move on York could save him. His situation was now terrible. "The enemy made their first parallel on the night of the 6th, at the distance of six hundred yards, and have perfected it, and constructed places of arms and batteries with great regularity and caution. On the evening of the 9th, their

[1] "Three Sets of this Letter sent, two by Water and one by Land."

batteries opened, and have since continued firing without intermission, with about forty pieces of cannon, mostly heavy, and sixteen mortars from eight to sixteen inches. We have lost seventy men, and many of our works are considerably damaged; *with such works on disadvantageous ground, against so powerful an attack we cannot hope to make a very long resistance.*"

There were two postscripts to this letter. One, written at five in the afternoon, said, "Since my letter was written, we have lost thirty men." And at seven next morning he added, "Last night the enemy made their second parallel at the distance of three hundred yards. We continue to lose men very fast."

The besieged were beginning to be distressed for want of forage. On the evening of October 2, Tarleton and his legion, with the mounted infantry, crossed the river to Gloucester Point, to help in the foraging. At daybreak next morning Colonel Dundas, who commanded there, led out part of his garrison to forage. About ten o'clock, just as the waggons and bat horses laden with Indian corn were returning, with Tarleton guarding their rear, word was brought that the enemy were advancing, and soon de Lauzun and the French Hussars were seen emerging from a cloud of dust. Tarleton advanced to meet them—Simcoe's Dragoons guarded the rear, by a woodside. There was a skirmish, but the superiority of Tarleton's horses gave him the advantage, till General Choisy came up to support the Hussars. Then a dragoon's horse, wounded by a lance, plunged and overthrew Tarleton, horse and man. The rear-guard rushed forward to rescue him. There was a short but sharp skirmish. Tarleton, mounting another horse, re-formed his men in a thicket; the Dragoons rallied, and the Hussars retired. This was Tarleton's last fight in the war. Next day Choisy cut off all communication between Gloucester and the surrounding country.

At this moment the besiegers had an opportunity of learning the effect of their fire. There was in York a very aged gentleman, a former Secretary under the royal Government, and still called "Mr. Secretary" Nelson. He had taken no part in the revolution, and had remained in Yorktown; but he had two sons in Washington's army. They now entreated the General to send in a flag, requesting that Secretary Nelson should be permitted to leave the town. Cornwallis agreed, and the old man came out, to the intense relief of his sons. He was suffering so much from gout that he could hardly stand. The Count de Chastellux has described

how he sat, with all the French and American Generals standing round him, as he told them how his own house had been battered, and one of his negroes killed, and how Lord Cornwallis had been obliged to shift his headquarters.

The shells were flying from both sides—black balls in the daytime, but at night seeming fiery meteors with blazing tails. Some that fell into the river, and burst, sent up columns of water, like spouting monsters. The red-hot shot from the French batteries reached the shipping, and three large transports were set on fire. The flames ran along the rigging, and up to the mastheads—a grand and awful spectacle, seen to the accompaniment of roaring cannon and exploding shells.

By this time communication was very precarious, and towards the end it was usually Major Cochran who contrived to slip past the enemy with the "purport" of a miscarried letter. In the very last days of the siege he brought a message from Clinton, all about the different plans suggested at the Council of War,—they were all futile, because they all assumed the possibility of a landing in Chesapeak, with thirty-six ships of the line guarding the entrance. The original letter contained postscripts—the first, of October 15, said that if the wind had been fair the fleet would have fallen down to the Hook, "but I expect the whole will sail to-morrow." On the 18th the fleet had got to the Hook, "the troops were embarked, and the whole will go to sea, if the wind continues fair, to-morrow morning, as the tide will not suit before." And again Clinton entreats that information may meet him off Cape Charles.

It was the 19th before the fleet got over the Bar—twenty-five ships of the line, 7149 officers and men, all told, with two fifties, and eight frigates, Admiral Graves and General Sir Henry Clinton. The most obstinate naval action ever fought was expected. As the fleet got under way, "a very notorious rebel" in New York hung out a white flag. Instantly a gun was fired at a small village about a mile from the British post at Paulus Hook, and after that a continual firing of cannon was heard on the opposite shore.[1] In forty-eight hours the news that Clinton had sailed reached Washington at Yorktown, 600 miles away.

At that last moment, too, Clinton received a despatch from Cornwallis. It was the last before his surrender. It was dated October 15, and was short. The enemy had carried both his

[1] Anburey.

redoubts by storm the night before, and by daybreak had included them in their second parallel. "My situation now becomes very critical; we dare not shew a gun to their old batteries, and I expect that their new ones will open to-morrow morning; experience has shewn that our fresh earthen works do not resist their powerful artillery, so that we shall soon be exposed to an assault in ruined works, in a bad position, and with weakened numbers.[1] The safety of the place is, therefore, so precarious, that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run great risque in endeavouring to save us."

[1] "Ce que fait vous dans le Galere," observes Clinton in his Note. In spite of the slips in this quotation, he was a very tolerable French scholar, when indignation did not carry him away.

CHAPTER CIX

THE SURRENDER OF CORNWALLIS

"The treatment, in general, that we have received from the enemy since our surrender, has been perfectly good and proper; but the kindness and attention that has been shewn to us by the French officers in particular, their delicate sensibility of our situation, their generous and pressing offer of money both public and private, to any amount, has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an impression on the breast of every British officer, whenever the fortune of war should put any of them into our power."—*Cornwallis to Sir Henry Clinton*, York Town, Virginia, October 20, 1781.

On the night of October 11, Baron Steuben's division opened the second parallel, three hundred yards nearer than the first. The British were now so weakened by sickness, "as well as by the fire of the besiegers," that Cornwallis could not venture on large sorties; but he opened new embrasures for guns, and kept up a constant fire with all the howitzers and small mortars he could man.

There were two advanced redoubts on the British left, the fire of which galled the besiegers, and was believed to command the communication between York and Gloucester. It was determined to storm them both on the same night. A detachment of Americans led by Lafayette was to take the one nearest the river, and a French detachment led by the Baron de Vionenil the other. The French were headed by the Gatinais regiment—formed out of that of Auvergne, of which Rochambeau had been colonel; and when he assigned them their post, and exhorted them to remember that they had served together in the regiment of *Auvergne sans tache*, they replied that if he would promise to get their old name restored to them they would fight to the last man. He promised. Lafayette had given the honour of leading the advance to his own aide-de-camp, but Alexander Hamilton claimed it, as it was his turn for duty.

At eight in the evening of the 14th rockets were sent up as signals for the simultaneous attacks. Not a musket was

fired — the Americans marched with unloaded arms, and scrambled over the abattis without stopping to remove them. Hamilton was the first man to mount the parapet, and Colonel Laurens was just after him. The redoubt was carried at the point of the bayonet. The French, setting to work less rashly and more regularly, lost more men — but both redoubts were carried.[1] The Hessians defended that taken by the French. One third of the Gatinais were slain, but the regiment recovered its name.

Washington might have fallen in this moment of victory— in his eagerness, he had dismounted and taken his stand in the grand battery, with Knox and Lincoln. Just as he had been warned that the position was very exposed, a musket-ball fell at his feet.

That night the two redoubts were included in the besiegers' second parallel. Cornwallis knew that his works could not stand many hours after the opening of the batteries of that parallel. He was firing with every gun and mortar he had; and a little before daybreak on the 15th he ordered a sortie of about 350 men, under Lieut.-Colonel Abercrombie, to attack the two batteries which seemed most nearly ready, and to spike their guns. The Guards and Grenadiers under Lake attacked one, and the Light Infantry under Armstrong the other, and both succeeded. Eleven guns were spiked, and about a hundred of the French on guard there were killed or wounded. But the cannon had been spiked in a hurry, and were soon fit for service again, and before dark the whole parallel seemed nearly finished.

"At this time we knew that there was no part of the whole front attacked, on which we could show a single gun, and our shells were nearly expended." There was nothing but surrender to-morrow, "or endeavouring to get off with the greatest part of the troops" that very night.[2] Cornwallis resolved to try—it would be something even to delay the enemy in further enterprises. Sixteen large boats were prepared, and, upon other pretexts, ordered to be ready to receive troops at ten precisely that night. With these he hoped to pass the infantry over in the dark, abandoning the baggage, and leaving a detachment to capitulate for the townspeople, the sick and wounded. A letter for General Washington was left to this effect.

That night the Light Infantry, the greatest part of the Guards, and part of the 23rd, were landed at Gloucester. But at this

[1] Charles de Lameth was in the French storming party, and was wounded.

[2] Cornwallis to Clinton, October 20, 1781 (from Yorktown).

critical moment the weather changed. From moderate and calm it turned to a most violent storm of wind and rain, and all the boats—some with troops on board—were driven down the river. The unfortunate Cornwallis was now in a worse position than ever—it was plain that the passage was impracticable, and the absence of the boats made it as impossible to get the troops back as to get any more over.[1] "In this situation, with my little force divided, the enemy's batteries opened at daybreak." The boats had now returned, and during the forenoon the troops which had crossed were got back without much loss. But the works were going to ruin, and were already assailable in so many places that in a few hours they would be in such a state that with his numbers it would be desperate to try to hold them. "We at that time could not fire a single gun, only one eight-inch and little more than an hundred cohorn shells remained;" and a diversion by the French ships at the mouth of the York River was expected. Cornwallis' numbers were worn down by wounds, and still more by sickness, and their strength and spirits were exhausted by constant watching and duty. To expose these brave troops to an assault would have been a wanton sacrifice of their lives. The unhappy General therefore proposed to capitulate — as Clinton unkindly observes—before he was summoned. But before the assault was delivered he could ask better terms—in fact, since the assault must inevitably succeed, he could then ask none, but must surrender at discretion, with all his works in possession of the enemy. So on the 17th of October he wrote this note to "His Excellency General Washington, commanding the combined Forces of France and America"—

"SIR,—I propose a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and that two officers may be appointed by each side, to meet at Mr. Moore's house, to settle terms for the surrender of York and Gloucester.—I have the honour to be, etc.

"CORNWALLIS."

Washington was terribly afraid of a rescue, even at this twelfth hour; for de Grasse wanted to be off to fight the British fleet, and if he stirred the transports might slip in. He therefore granted only two hours' cessation; and asked for Cornwallis' proposals. At half-past four in the afternoon Cornwallis sent them. The garrisons of York and Gloucester to be prisoners of war, with the customary honours. The British to be sent to Britain, and the

[1] Clinton asks, "where are the boats I ordered Arnold to construct and you stopt him?"

Germans to Germany, under engagement not to serve against France, America, or their allies, until released or regularly exchanged. All arms and public stores to be given up, but officers to retain their side-arms, and the interests of civilians to be attended to.

Washington replied next day. The British and Germans cannot be sent home—they will be marched to such parts of the country as can most conveniently feed them, "and the benevolent treatment of the prisoners, which is invariably observed by the Americans, will be extended to them." The same honours will be granted as were granted by the British at Charlestown.

The terms finally agreed on, declared the garrisons to be prisoners of war—the land troops to the United States, the naval to the naval army (*sic*) of His Most Christian Majesty. (I.)

II. Arms and artillery to be given up unimpaired.

III. At 12 o'clock this day, the two redoubts on the left flank of York to be delivered up—the one to a detachment of American infantry, the other to a detachment of French grenadiers. The garrison of York to march out at 2 o'clock to a place appointed in front of the posts, "with shouldered arms, colours cased, and drums beating a British or German march." Then to ground their arms, and return to their encampments, there to remain till despatched to the place of their destination. Two works on the Gloucester side to be delivered up at one o'clock to a detachment of French and American troops. The garrison to march out at 3 o'clock, the cavalry with swords drawn, and trumpets sounding, and the infantry as at York.

IV. Officers to retain their side-arms, and both officers and soldiers to keep their private property of every kind, and no baggage or papers to be searched. Baggage and papers taken during the siege will be preserved for officers and soldiers.

(To this Washington added a proviso, that "property obviously belonging to the inhabitants of these States, shall be subject to be reclaimed.")

V. The soldiers to be kept in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania, and as much by regiments as possible, and to be supplied with the same rations as soldiers in the service of America. A field officer from each nation, "to wit, British, Anspach, and Hessian," and other officers on parole, in the proportion of one to fifty men, to be allowed to reside near their respective regiments, to visit them frequently, and be witnesses of their treatment, and officers may receive and deliver clothing and other necessaries for them.

VI. The General Staff, and other officers who choose, to be permitted to go on parole to Europe, to New York, or to any other American maritime posts at present in the possession of the British; and proper vessels to be granted by the Count de Grasse to carry them under flags of truce to New York, within ten days from this date, if possible.

VII. Officers to be allowed to keep soldiers as servants, according to the common practice of the service. Servants not soldiers may attend their masters, and are not to be considered prisoners.

VIII. The *Bonetta*, sloop of war, to be equipped, and navigated by its present Captain and crew, and left entirely at the disposal of Lord Cornwallis, from the hour the Capitulation is signed, to receive an Aide-de-camp to carry despatches to Sir Henry Clinton; and such soldiers as Lord Cornwallis may think proper to send to New York, to be permitted to sail without examination. His Lordship engages on his part that the ship shall be delivered to the order of the Count de Grasse, "if she escapes the dangers of the sea." She shall not carry off any public stores.

IX. Traders to preserve their property, and be allowed three months to dispose of or remove it; these traders not to be considered prisoners of war.

(Washington altered this Article. The allied army to have the right of pre-emption in the disposal of the property, and the traders to be considered prisoners of war.)

X. Natives or inhabitants of different parts of this country at present in York or Gloucester, not to be punished for having joined the British army.

(Washington disallowed this Article, "being altogether of civil resort.")

XI. Proper hospitals to be furnished for the sick and wounded, to be attended by their own surgeons on parole, and furnished with medicines and stores from the American hospitals.

XII. Waggons to be furnished to carry the baggage of officers attending the soldiers, and to surgeons when travelling on account of the sick and wounded.

(They are to be furnished if possible.)

XIII. Shipping and boats in the two harbours to be delivered up in their present state, previously unlading the private property, part of which had been put on board for security during the siege.

XIV. No Article of Capitulation to be infringed on pretence of reprisals, and any doubtful expressions to be interpreted

according to the common meaning and acceptation of the words.

Done at York-town, in Virginia, October 19, 1781.

CORNWALLIS. THOS. SYMONDS.

Done in the trenches before York-town, in Virginia, October 19, 1781.

G. WASHINGTON, Le Comte de ROCHAMBEAU.

Le Comte de BARRAS, En mon nom et celui du Comte de GRASSE.

The terms were drawn up by Colonel Laurens, the Commissioner for the Americans—whose father was then a prisoner in the Tower, denied the use of pen and ink.

Washington had arranged that Lincoln should receive the submission of the royal army—many of whom had been present when Lincoln surrendered Charlestown on the 12th of May, 1780.

An American officer, Colonel Thacher, has left an account of the ceremonial. At noon, the combined army was drawn up in two lines more than a mile in length, the Americans on the right of the road, the French on the left. Washington, "mounted on a noble steed," was in front of the Americans, Rochambeau of the French. The French troops, "in complete uniform, and well-equipped, made a brilliant appearance, and marched with a band playing"—a novelty in American service. The Americans, "but part in uniform, and all in garments much the worse for wear, yet had a spirited, soldier-like air." There seemed to be as many spectators as soldiers—so many had flocked to see a British army surrender. But "silence and order prevailed."

"About two o'clock, the garrison sallied forth, and passed through with shouldered arms, slow and solemn step, colours cased, and drums beating a British march"—and all well-clad, for Cornwallis, having a great supply of clothing, had put them into new clothes just before the Capitulation was signed. They were led by General O'Hara on horseback, "who, riding up to General Washington, took off his hat and apologized for the non-appearance of Lord Cornwallis, on account of indisposition. Washington received him with dignified courtesy, but pointed to General Lincoln as the officer who was to receive the submission of the garrison." Lincoln conducted them into a field, where they were to ground their arms. "In passing through the line formed by the allied army, their march was careless and irregular and their aspect sullen," says Thacher. The order to "ground arms" was given

"by their platoon officers with a tone of deep chagrin, and many of the soldiers threw down their muskets with a violence sufficient to break them." Lincoln checked this, but Thacher pitied them and thought it "excusable in brave men in their unfortunate predicament." The great difficulty had been the loyalists. As Washington had announced his intention of handing them over to the Civil Jurisdiction, those who had most to fear were got off quietly to New York in the *Bonetta*. The XIVth Article became of extreme importance next year, and had its share in saving the life of Captain Asgill.

By an extraordinary coincidence the Capitulation of Yorktown took place four years all but to a day after the surrender of Burgoyne.

Clinton and Graves, with the British fleet, arrived off Cape Charles on the 24th—there the pilot of the *Charon* and other persons came off to them, and told them that Cornwallis had proposed terms of capitulation on the 18th. These persons had escaped from Yorktown the same day, and knew no more, except that the firing had ceased. About the same time the *Nymph* frigate came for New York, with Cornwallis' despatch of the 16th–17th.

For a few days more the fleet remained, "plying off the Capes, with variable and hard gales of wind"; but all they heard was a confirmation of the news, from two men taken in a canoe. So on the 29th, Clinton, still off the Chesapeak, wrote to tell Germaine that there was not the least doubt Cornwallis had capitulated, "and that we are unfortunately too late to relieve him"—and so the fleet was going back to Sandy Hook.

In this miserable business perhaps Clinton was even more to be pitied than Cornwallis. The favourite idea of a divided Command—the Double Cabinet in a military form—had long placed him in the cruel position of a man who has no control over operations for whose failure he will be held responsible. His important post—the most important of all, if the moral effect of losing it were considered—was reduced to "a starved defensive," that Cornwallis might abandon the Carolinas, and hold a precarious "place of arms" in Virginia. As Cornwallis had been encouraged to write direct to Germaine, Clinton was not even always kept fully informed. His representations of the true state of things, and of the danger of New York, had brought him into semi-disgrace, till Germaine had taken to writing to him in the third person. In addition to all this, there were constant misunderstandings with a brave but probably wrong-headed Admiral. It would have been obvious to any other Secretary for War that these two officers

could not work together, and that one or other of them must be recalled, or removed elsewhere. This would have been easy in the case of the Admiral; but Germaine was too obstinate to do it, and he dared not quarrel openly with another General—there were already too many of them arrayed in the House against him, calling for enquiry which Germaine dared not face.

Cornwallis completed Clinton's exasperation by prefacing his account of his surrender with the remark, "I never saw this post in a very favourable light."[1] Cornwallis rested his defence on the definite order to fortify a post, and on Clinton's promises to relieve him. The two Generals had a stormy interview before Cornwallis returned to England on parole; and many letters passed between them, all of which were soon published. Each of them wrote an account of the transactions, and from these, and the despatches themselves, we can trace every changing mood of both Commanders. The impression left by Clinton's despatches is of an honest man, not naturally weak, but somewhat unnerved by the false position in which he found himself — shut out from the confidence of Ministers, and compelled to forego "solid" operations, that Cornwallis — the Minister's pet — might march about the Carolinas, gaining victories and losing provinces. Clinton's main defence of himself is, that he never overrode Cornwallis' judgment—even when, as usually happened, he disapproved of it—and that his promises to relieve him were always dependent on the co-operation of the Navy. It is clear that he did not relieve Cornwallis in time, because on that stormy coast the fleet could never put to sea for a week without having to return to harbour to refit, for three; and because the fleet was so badly crippled in the action of the 5th September, that it was rendered helpless for five weeks. But much earlier in the campaign Clinton's false alarm for New York had disastrous results, and probably was the determining cause why Cornwallis chose Yorktown, as at any rate the least unsatisfactory of several unsatisfactory posts. Washington's stratagem was more effective than all Cornwallis' victories.

[1] Letter of October 20th—"written under great agitation of mind," says Cornwallis later. Clinton annotated this unfortunate remark in every copy of the "Narrative," "Answer," or "Correspondence" that he gave away, as well as in Tarleton and Stedman. "Why then did you chuse it in preference," he asks; "why report so favorably of it why say you should be prepared by the 2nd october, the Enemy did not open a gun upon you till the 9th." Why not report its defects? "as he had done those of old Point Comfort which I had recommended." Another note says, "because he did not defend the works he at first raised but trusted to others ill chose, ill constructed commanded and enfiladed, and not thought of till after the french arrived."

And although Clinton was deceived, if he had disregarded the intercepted letters, and denuded New York of yet more troops to strengthen Cornwallis, it is highly probable that he really would have been attacked. But the question of who was to blame is of very secondary importance. The picture Clinton draws of the situation — and especially of the value of "our friends"—shows conclusively that the conquest of America by Great Britain was inherently impossible.

The Capitulation of Yorktown was the end of the war. It was also the deathblow of the North Administration. It is true that the war staggered on for another fifteen months,[1] but it was a war only in name, and its events were only outrages by Loyalists on Whigs, avenged by other outrages of Whigs on Loyalists—like the hanging of Captains White and Huddy, which so nearly cost the life of young Asgill. Through nine of the fifteen months negotiations for peace were going on, and the armies sat looking at each other, knowing all was over. The North Ministry also staggered on for four or five months, but it, too, knew that its hours were numbered.

It was known in England by November 17 that Graves and Clinton were on the point of sailing with reinforcements for Cornwallis. A fortnight before this, Lieut.-Colonel Conway[2] had brought a despatch from Clinton which said that the French were absolute masters of the navigation of the Chesapeak. But no one expected a catastrophe. Conway came home on leave, granted when the campaign in Virginia was "supposed to be over." His news was considered good on the whole—it was thought that Cornwallis would beat Lafayette, and then retire on Charlestown; and before Conway sailed a report had come that this had actually happened. But Conway told his father privately that we had not a friend left in America. And Clinton had told Conway that as soon as he had relieved Cornwallis he meant to call him out![3]

[1] Reckoning to the Signing of the Preliminaries, January, 1783.

[2] Son of Lord Hertford, and a younger brother of General Conway.

[3] "They [Clinton and Cornwallis] were so ill together, that Clinton had owned to Conway he was determined to challenge Cornwallis after the campaign."—Walpole, *Last Journals*.

CHAPTER CX

THE EFFECT OF YORKTOWN

"... the necessity of carrying on the war, though the mode of it may require alteration."—*The King to Lord North*, Nov. 28, 1781.

"Charles I, James II, and George III will be for ever memorable for blundering away their power in the pursuit of enlarging it. The two first met with the common fate of such attempts conducted without skill. The case of the latter is more singular, and though less fatal to his person and interest, far more detrimental to his kingdom. He has lost more dominions than ever monarch lost who did not lose his crown. . . . The composition which the Germanic body makes with every new Emperor ought to be observed on all accessions of princes . . . a concordat ought to be made with every new sovereign, by which he should relinquish some branches of prerogative."—H. Walpole, *Last Journals*, ii. 517.

PARLIAMENT was to meet on the 27th of November. The Cabinet was very anxious for news from America. On Sunday, the 25th, about noon, an express from Falmouth arrived at Germaine's house in Pall Mall. He brought Clinton's despatch, written at sea, on October 29, containing the certain news of Cornwallis' surrender. Lord Walsingham (son of De Grey) happened to be with the American Secretary. Germaine told him, and they got into a hackney-coach and drove to Lord Stormont's in Portland Place. Then all three went to Chancellor Thurlow, in Great Russell Street, and finding him at home held a hasty consultation. It was resolved to tell North at once. All four arrived in Downing Street between one and two.

Germaine was once asked how North took it. "As he would have taken a ball in his breast," he replied. "He opened his arms, exclaiming wildly as he paced up and down the room, 'O God! it is all over!'"

When North had a little recovered, they discussed what should be done—should Parliament be prorogued a few days? The time was too short—members would have already started. But the King's Speech must be altered! This was done—and then Germaine sent a despatch to the King at Kew.[1]

[1] The Duc de Lauzun brought the news to France. He reached Brest

The King's Speech of November 27 is an attempt to disguise a great disaster by bluster. It announces his intention to go on with the war indefinitely. It admits that the success of his efforts this year "has not equalled the justice of his cause"—but then there is a favourable appearance of affairs in the East Indies, and our commercial fleets have arrived safely. "The late misfortune" in America calls loudly for your firm concurrence and assistance to frustrate "the designs of our enemies"—with a little about "my deluded subjects in America," and a hint that the Estimates this year will be heavy. And so, with a "firm confidence in the protection of Divine Providence, and a perfect conviction of the justice of my cause," it leaves them to their deliberations.

Lord Southampton rose to move the Address. It expressed concern and indignation at the war being prolonged ("by that restless ambition which first provoked it"), and it thanked his Majesty for his fixed and unalterable resolution never to sacrifice his rights. Lord Walsingham, who seconded, seemed not to have got over the shock he experienced last Sunday. While highly approving the Address, he hinted that our West India Islands and our most valuable fisheries were in danger—our dominion of the sea also evidently appeared to him a little precarious, for he talked about "these two islands" gradually falling into a state of insignificance and national imbecility

after a voyage of twenty-two days, and arrived at Versailles on November 19. Wraxall dined that day at Germaine's, and did not yet know the news, though it had reached London that morning from two different quarters. He reached Pall Mall between 5 and 6 o'clock. Of the persons at dinner, only Lord Walsingham and Lord George knew. A party of nine sat down to table. Wraxall thought the master of the house appeared serious. Before dinner was over, a servant brought a letter from the King. Lord George glanced at it, and handed it to Walsingham, observing that the King wrote "just as he always does," except that he had omitted to mark the hour and minute with his usual precision. This remark raised some curiosity, but till Lord George's three daughters withdrew nothing was said. Then Lord George told the gentlemen that the old Count de Maurepas, First Minister of France, was dying. Wraxall observed, "It would grieve me, if I were First Minister of France, to die before this great contest between England and America is ended." "He has survived to see that event," said Lord George, with some agitation. Wraxall thought he referred to the indecisive action between Graves and de Grasse at the mouth of the Chesapeak, last September—which it was known placed Cornwallis in danger. "I mean," he explained, "I should like to see the end of the war in Virginia." "He has survived to witness it completely," said Lord George. "The army has surrendered." And with visible emotion he gave Wraxall a paper containing the terms of Capitulation. Wraxall read it aloud amidst the profound silence of the company.

if the West Indies and the fisheries no longer employed our seamen—"the best strength of the nation." Under all his bold and defiant words there lurks a doubt whether we had not perhaps better recall our troops from America at once. He conjures the Ministry, "whatever they did with the troops, never to recall the fleet," because if they did America could so easily establish a marine that the commerce of all our islands would be destroyed. Shelburne said this was a time when a Ministry should "withstand the mere impulse of their Master's sentiments," and tell him the truth. Whether the Speech they had just heard was the genuine sentiment of his Majesty, or merely what had been put into his mouth, he intended to give his opinion on it. And first, how came the East Indies in it? We have no authentic information to enable us to say whether we have anything to boast of there. The abominable peculations are a scandal and disgrace to Ministers, who ought to have applied a cure long ago. And even if Hyder Ali is repulsed, the damage his irruption has done cannot be retrieved for a great number of years. And not a syllable about the Bengal treasury! The fact is, "there is not a single shilling there, and the territorial revenues in the East Indies, are so far from being a mine of resource, that they will prove a heavy burden." Then he came to the war. It was now thirteen years since they sent those two regiments to General Gage; and seven since blood was first drawn. There has been neither "system, combination, nor intelligence." We have all along been following the French—and we are always too late. It was so in the Chesapeak. And presently, if the war continues, there will be another Chesapeak at Jamaica —and another at Barbadoes! Perhaps one at Plymouth—or in the River Thames! He called the Dutch war "the phrenzy of going to war with our old natural friend and ally." For his part, if he had ever determined upon being a rogue, he would at least have been an able rogue, and done something "great enough to bear out his perfidy." When Ministers broke with the Dutch, he supposed at least that they had sent to seize on the Spice Islands or Ceylon. But they had taken St. Eustatius! He told the House last year that St. Eustatius would prove the worst job of the war. His prediction had been verified. Ministers said the taking St. Eustatius would put an end to the rebellion—it was the source of supplies to America, and the war would be finished by taking it. Was it? Our Admiral and General had ten times better have burnt the stores they found, than have done what they did with them. They sold them to go

in neutral vessels, and they fell into the hands of the very people from whom they were to be kept! He declared he believed the capture of Cornwallis was owing to the capture of St. Eustatius! And how can we prosecute the war? Where are the resources? Where are the men and the money? From living in the country, he knew that there was hardly a single recruit to be had for any of the old regiments on any terms. And if we had the best First Lord that ever sat, how could he possibly provide ships and men for so extensive a war? And as for money, the Loan of 12 millions cost the country 21, so extravagant were the terms of it. The war has already added 80 millions to the National Debt, and before the next campaign is over it will be 100. He rehearsed the financial history of the war since 1775. That year Ministers borrowed nothing, because they were afraid of alarming Parliament. In 1776 we borrowed 2 millions; in 1777 (after beating the Americans in two pitched battles and losing 5000 of our finest troops) we borrowed 5. In 1778 came the war with France, we borrowed 7 (and abandoned Philadelphia and Rhode Island). The campaigns of 1779 were rather successful — we gained ground in the South; but Spain joined France, and we borrowed 10 millions. In 1780, we took Charlestown—that year we borrowed 12 millions. Then came 1781, which ends with the capture of 7000 of the best veteran troops in Europe; and we borrow another 12 millions. And now we have hardly a foot of ground in America to call our own.

Richmond said it was the King's Ministers, not the King's enemies, who were the cause of the war, and of all our calamities since the commencement of the present reign—that wretched system of government which first gave rise to the odious distinction, called "a king's friend"—as if a man could not oppose the measures of government without being a personal enemy to his Majesty. He then got on his favourite subject of a reform in representation. At present, scarcely a seventh part of the people were represented — the rest had no voice whatever in the management of their own affairs. He appealed to the House — did not many of their lordships name the members for several boroughs, and were not the representatives chosen only by the "management" of two or three burgesses? Was that the representation intended by the Constitution? And when this matter was reformed, there were other things necessary if the country was to regain somewhat of its former greatness. At present, it was governed by clerks—each Minister stood on his single footing, and confined himself to his own

office, and so there was no responsibility, no union of opinion, no concerted action—"only disunion, weakness and corruption." "The interior cabinet" had been the ruin of this country.

He advised making the war defensive only — by which he meant, a war by sea. Strengthen the Navy, and diminish the Army. Ireland can be sufficiently guarded by the Volunteers, and this country by the Militia, if put on a proper footing. Arm the country—this will be a more powerful defence than any army. He recommended withdrawing the troops from America, and strengthening the West India Islands. Then he spoke of our fortifications at home — money had been wasted ridiculously on works of no use whatever. There were the lines at Chatham — as a military man, he declared they were the most absurd and ineffectual that could be devised — yet they had been erected at immense expense. The parapet was only 7 feet thick — every military man knew it should be at least 18 to be cannon-proof. Such "paper works" would be knocked to pieces at the first fire.

Then Lord Westmoreland got up to prove that the Romans had much worse disasters than the loss of 6000 men — but they never thought of treating for peace immediately after a defeat. Why, once they lost three armies in a single war! He spoke more wisely when he said that our insolent conduct in the time of prosperity was the reason we now had no allies. This called up Abingdon in one of his slashing speeches — the noble Earl who spoke last had not mentioned any instances of nations destroyed by evil counsels, weak or wicked measures, and "mad, blind, incurable obstinacy." Every nation had gone to destruction, where the Prince was misled by incapable Ministers. He advised him to read Thucydides (in a translation) — there he would find circumstances and events much more applicable than those he had mentioned.

Dorset said we had gone too far to go back. Then Rockingham rose.

These calamities, he said, had been long preparing — they were not produced by "any sudden or transient cause; they were the fruits of system and predetermination; of a combination of views and motives, long and sedulously weighed and considered," but which could not be carried into effect till a certain event (the death of the late King). That event at length took place, and in a few months the system began to exhibit itself. "It was a proscriptive system, a system of favouritism and secret government." Our affairs were then most prosperous

—great men were at the head of them. He named them, beginning with Pitt. One by one they were obliged to resign —they saw they did not possess the confidence of the Sovereign. Henceforth everything was conducted by favouritism and secret influence. At last the mask was thrown aside, and in 1767 the real system of 1760 was fully developed.

Towards the end he referred to the war. When these unhappy disturbances broke out in Boston, we had not a single declared enemy in the world.

Denbigh tried to lay the blame for Yorktown on Clinton and Graves—Rodney had sent word of de Grasse's expedition —he had ordered Hood to go to the Chesapeak, and wait till Graves joined him—but Graves did not join him. He did not mean to blame anybody—only to clear Ministers.

After Derby and Grafton had attacked Ministers, Lord Hillsborough rose to defend them—and the Address. He was particularly indignant at the favourable turn of affairs in the East Indies being ridiculed. The truth was, our affairs there had worn the most unpromising appearance. General Baillie and 4000 veteran troops had been cut to pieces or captured by Hyder Ali. Sir Hector Munro had to make a precipitate retreat to Madras, and the whole Carnatic was laid waste. But by the latest accounts Sir Eyre Coote had completely defeated Hyder, and killed 8000 of his men.

Camden, in a long speech, went over the mistakes of the war. He was very severe on the affair of St. Eustatius[1]—"In a time of profound peace, without any preceding declaration, we seized one of the Dutch islands; but what more? we seized private property of every kind, no matter whether belonging to friend or foe—and we had not even spent the million and a half on the war—it has "sunk into the pockets of a few individuals." It has alienated Holland. Almost every Power in Europe is in a state nearly approaching to actual hostility, and if we do not accept the new code that "free bottoms make free goods," we shall have the whole Armed Confederacy to contend with. Then he spoke of all the drawn battles, and all the too-late arrivals of our squadrons—there were Dominica, the Grenadines, St. Vincent, Tobago—it was the same everywhere, and then the Commander wrote a despatch to describe the disaster, "and how extremely unlucky it was that he did not arrive a week, a fortnight, or a month sooner." We had had fleets mutually

[1] Denbigh had said the capture of St. Eustatius was worth at least a million and a half to Great Britain.

offering each other battle, mutually declining it, and at length parting without coming to blows! Has anything like this happened in any other nation, from the beginning of the world?

Shelburne's Amendment[1]—was lost by 31 to 75.

In the Commons, Charles Perceval moved the Address in a speech typical of the arguments which had for so many years sufficed to keep the country firm in a ruinous course. We *must* go on now—eyes of Europe are on us—don't let foreigners think we are afraid. We are in danger, but "not undone." We are in debt, but war is expensive. Things have not turned out as favourably as the righteousness of our cause deserved—but nothing is required but unanimity to defeat our enemies. Let us drop party and go on with the war. The people of England are not to be dispirited because of "a disagreeable event or two"; let us by all means thank his Majesty for going on. Orde, who seconded, grew eloquent on our "friendly and paternal" conduct in restoring America to a connection with this country—instead of letting her become the subject of France. He, too, admitted that the war was expensive, and that affairs "had not fallen out so well as might have been expected." He would venture to say that "the quarrel was at first a favourite in the nation," and not merely the project of Administration. He could not conceive any foundation for the charge that Government was bent on rigour to America, or had used unrelenting persecution, or meant to insist on unconditional submission. He attributed our ill-success in America to the perfidy of the French. He was sure we would all be very glad of peace, but the malice and ambition of our enemies made war a sad necessity. We had no allies—but that was not the fault of Ministers—they could not help it. All that was left for us was to look to the internal defence of the Kingdom, and, above all, to be unanimous.

Desperate indeed was the plight of a Ministry which put forward such a defence.

Fox replied. He referred to the fact that the mover and seconder were both young men, and young members. Only young members, who did not know what Ministers had done, could venture to defend them. He himself was a young man, though he could not be called a young member—but he had

[1] To leave out all the Address, after the second paragraph, and insert the words: "And we will, without delay, apply ourselves with united hearts to prepare and digest such councils to be laid at his royal feet, as may excite the efforts, point the arms, and command the confidence of all his subjects."

seen the whole system—"had heard their progressive madness, impolicy, or treachery." He was confounded that they dared look the House of Commons in the face, much more sit and hear such an Address moved at such a time. It filled him with horror. The speech seemed that of "some arbitrary, despotic, hard-hearted, and unfeeling monarch, who having involved the slaves his subjects in a ruinous and unnatural war, to glut his enmity or to satiate his revenge, was determined to persevere in spite of calamity, and even of fate." It was the speech of a monarch incapable of feeling his own misfortunes! The gentleman who moved had charged Opposition with expressing joy at the triumph of America. It was quite true that he himself had once said he was pleased with the resistance they had met with. If they had succeeded, Ministers would have gone on to attack the liberties of Britain. The Earl of Chatham had said the same — he had thanked God that America resisted.[1] Our calamities are ascribed "to the wishes, and the joy, and the speeches of opposition." "Oh, blind and incapable men, whose measures not only crumble to pieces, but ruin the country, because one rash, weak, or wicked man in the House of Commons makes a speech against them!" We want to know who is responsible for the iniquitous measures of Government, and the Ministry answer that Opposition is responsible! The gentleman who seconded said he hoped there would be no more retrospective censure at the present moment. But this is the day when Ministers must hear of what they have done. "It beggared the records of nations"—there was no instance of men who had ruined a country, and yet remained secure amidst the storms of public disaster. At the beginning, they called the war a squabble—it was only Hancock and his crew. For saying this a learned member was exalted to the dignity of a peer[2]—for abusing our fellow-subjects in America, and calling them "Hancock and his crew!" They promised us a revenue from America—and did not believe we should get one. They saw France preparing for war, and came down day after day, and told us she was friendly; and when they could conceal the truth no longer, they adjourned the House. They went to war with the Dutch without a cause—when policy demanded we should remain friends. How glad the French must have been to see

[1] Fox always rejoiced when armies of invaders were defeated—he hoped that after Yorktown mankind would come to believe power resting on armed force was detestable, weak, and tottering.

[2] Wedderburn, created Lord Loughborough.

Parker and Zoutman tearing each other to pieces! If Ministers had been in the pay of France, they could not have served her more effectually. The gentleman who seconded said we must not blame the gallant and unfortunate lord who commanded the army in Virginia—we must receive him with praises, for victories were the preludes to his surrender. But what of the Ministry who ordered him to persevere? Had not all the Generals been brave, and all unfortunate! The taking of Ticonderoga ended with the surrender of Saratoga. The Brandywine ended with the recall of Sir William Howe; and the victory of Camden with the Capitulation at York. And all these brave Generals were persecuted and reviled. Now it will be the turn of Cornwallis, or Clinton, or Admiral Graves—when they have made up their minds on whom to fix the blame; they will not put it in the right place—on their own weakness, obstinacy, inhumanity, or treason. And now we have surrendered an army to the French and Americans—that is the worst of all. This will establish a claim of gratitude, and tie the two people together in friendship, and give rise to commercial connections, and shut us out from American trade. Ministers had expressed gratitude—for what? Hear it, Mr. Speaker—they are glad that our fleet does not venture to fight the enemy. Cornwallis with the purest patriotism, wrote, "Do not venture to relieve me—do not decide the fate of our country by including yourselves in my disaster." To this we are reduced! He did not blame Graves—Lord Hawke himself the Father of the British Navy, would have done the same. All the ablest officers (they are all on shore!) had told Fox that it would have been madness for Graves to have attacked the French—he would have risked losing the whole fleet as well as the whole army that he had on board! Once a British Admiral did not know what it was to retreat before the French. This was one of the things the Earl of Sandwich had introduced into the service of Great Britain! "He had made it an essential part of the duty of an English Admiral to run away!" He, who once declared in his place in the House of Peers, that he deserved to lose his head if he ever failed to have a fleet equal to the united fleets of France and Spain!

Minchin, who seconded the Amendment, told some astonishing facts about the ignorance of the Admiralty. When a newspaper published news of the approach of the French and Spanish fleets, the Admiralty contradicted it. When Lord Shuldam, commanding at Plymouth, sent to warn Bristol, the Commander at Bristol received an express from the Admiralty the very same day, telling him

"it was no such thing—their lordships did not believe the combined fleets were out of port." Luckily, the Bristol merchants listened to Lord Shuldam, and kept their ships at home.

Mulgrave tried to defend Sandwich. It was not fair to bring up "a loose expression uttered some years ago." The noble lord was not to blame—it was the nature of our situation—the combined Powers dragged us to every quarter they pleased, because their superiority in numbers enabled them to choose in what quarter of the world they should wage war. The parsimony of Lord Hawke, and his system, had crippled the British Navy. And we never were equal to France in a naval contest, when France put out her full strength. In the reign of King William she was superior, and also in the reign of Queen Anne. It was ungrateful and ungenerous to call this a disgraceful war.

Mulgrave had been very warm, and Keppel was very angry. If the present First Lord had done his duty these misfortunes would never have occurred. If the House would call for papers he would prove this.

But there was nothing this House disliked so much as calling for papers.

North's speech is memorable for a passage about America. He said the object of the war had not been to increase the power of the Crown—"*The Americans had no objection to submit to the authority of the Crown*; but they objected to all dependence on the Parliament. . . . *It was to the claims of the parliament, and not those of the Sovereign, that they were averse.*"[1]

This voluntary admission must settle the question. It confesses that America was willing to remain subject to the British Crown on the same terms as the inhabitants of these islands, and that all she refused was to be the subject of subjects. For the rest, North said the war was "unfortunate, but not unjust."

Burke, in great warmth, said the war was disgraceful—not unfortunate. Fortune had nothing to do with what had happened. The King's Speech is the greatest calamity of all, for it shows they mean to plunge us deeper. The rights for which we went to war! We have paid dear for those rights! They have cost us thirteen provinces, four islands, 100,000 men, and more than 70 millions of money. They have taken from us our rank among

[1] "Was not this the fact? Did not men know that the Americans wished to be governed by the King and their own assemblies; and that they went to war because they would not be governed by the legislature of Britain?"

nations, our importance abroad, our happiness at home—our trade, our manufactures, our commerce. We did all this because we had a right to do it; we had a right to tax America—so we must do it. We must risk everything, forfeit everything—we will have our bond. "America, give us our bond; next your heart we will have it; the pound of flesh is ours, and we will have it. This was their language. Oh, says a silly man, full of his prerogative of dominion over a few beasts of the field, there is excellent wool on the back of a wolf, and therefore he must be sheared. What! shear a wolf? Have you considered the trouble? I have considered nothing, and I will consider nothing, but my right." This was the reasoning! Then think of the various stories they told, and the various plans taken up, abandoned, then taken up again. What has the war been, but a continual series of marching, counter-marching, taking and evacuating? *Redde nobis legiones!*

Germaine said the Address did not pledge the House to continue the war (North had said so too. If it did not mean this, it meant nothing). He talked about the "maintenance of our essential rights," as though he had been the man who went out to shear the wolf. This was a most calamitous disaster—he should lament it to the end of his life. He was ready to justify his share in all the measures of the war. He was ready to quit office—when it pleased his royal Master. All he ever wanted to do was to support the loyalists against "the inimical." He had always understood the loyalists were numerous, and only needed the assistance of English arms to give them authority. He would never be the Minister to give up the dependence of America—this country depended on the connection with America—take away America, and we should sink into perfect insignificance.

Mr. Daubeny went much further. The war was founded on justice, and the citizens of Bristol were willing to sacrifice half their fortunes to prosecute it.

Viscount Maitland said there was not a people in the world who would not have been roused by such a calamity to pluck these men from the authority they had abused. Were they not afraid of the future historian? What could even their friends say of them, in writing of the present time? One of the greatest historians living (Gibbon) had been reduced to praising them for discovering the little island of Otaheite, to cover their loss of the continent of America!

Rigby—who had once said that if the fall of Charlestown was not decisive, he would be for going no further with the war—took

refuge in indignation at the idea of consulting constituents—a most unconstitutional, if not illegal practice, leading to disaster, public tumult, outrage.

This long and often angry debate showed that the very foundations of the Ministry were shaken. The loss of the Amendment[1] could not undo the effect of the feeble and vacillating defence which Ministers made to the fierce onslaughts of Opposition.

Next day, on the motion for bringing up the Address, William Pitt rose to express his indignation. The duty he owed to his Sovereign would not allow him to be silent—he would show him he had been deceived. If the Address were published to the world, it would be a greater misfortune than any which preceded it—it would deceive the King, prostitute the judgment of the House of Commons, insult the people. Is there a man in the House who would trust Ministers? Think of the supplies that have been voted—the means devised, the use they have made of them! Is the American war to have no end? The articles of Cornwallis' Capitulation show that we cannot protect the loyalists who have been treacherously deluded into joining him—our friends are left to the civil justice of America. He did not know what that was, but he hoped the civil justice of this country would soon overtake men who deserved it more than these unfortunate wretches.

There was a buzz of applause as Pitt sat down, and it was some time before the House would listen to Dundas.[2] An angry and somewhat disorderly debate ended in the Address being carried by 131 to 54.[3] The King thanked both Houses effusively.

Then came Thomas Pitt's Motion to delay Supplies; and Burke's for an enquiry into the treatment of Mr. Laurens. On December 4 there was a far more interesting debate, on Burke's Motion to Enquire into the Confiscations at St. Eustatius. Again Burke described the extraordinary conduct of the Admiral, "who did not leave the conquered a shilling," and ordered "a general proscription." He instanced the case of Mr. Gouverneur, a dry-goods merchant, who had nothing to do with military or naval

[1] By 129 to 218.

[2] "The Lord Advocate was very able, but had not the least experience in State affairs, was the rankest of all Scotchmen, and odious for that bloody speech that had fixed on him the nickname of *Starvation*." This day he occasioned great surprise. He seemed to adopt the language of Opposition . . . accused them of disunion, "but the more he was pressed to explain, the more shuffling and obscure he grew."—WALPOLE. The Duke of Gloucester told Walpole that Dundas' speech was meant to frighten Germaine into giving up the seals, "and he thought that he should have them that evening."

[3] The small numbers will be observed.

stores, but was seized, his property confiscated, himself hurried on board to be carried to England, while his wife could not get one of her own beds to lie on. The Admiral considered Gouverneur "in a two-fold light"—as a Dutchman he confiscated his property, as an Englishman he sent him to England to be tried as a traitor.

Rodney wrote to de Bouillé "in language that equalled the highest ever used in the wildest days of chivalry," bidding him defiance, and telling him he did not dare retaliate. But after a menacing letter from the Court of France, the French had better treatment. Again, at the very time that Cornwallis was surrounded with forty-two pieces of heavy artillery, and could not "show the nose of a gun" to the enemy, Arnold was burning shops and houses—a thing he never did till he joined the British standard. And Cornwallis had been obliged to insist on an article to screen his troops from reprisals.

The poor Jews of St. Eustatius were treated, if possible, worse than the rest. One of them, Mr. Hoheb, a venerable old gentleman nearly seventy, even had his clothes searched, "and from this bit of linen (here Burke held it up) which was sewed in the poor man's coat, were taken 36 shillings, which he had had the consummate audacity to conceal to buy victuals!" Here is the linen, and I can produce at the Bar the coat and the man! The Commanders were without excuse—they took no opinion on the legality of the confiscation, though they could have had that of his Majesty's Attorney- and Solicitor-General, at St. Kitt's; and Mr. Bridgewater, the Solicitor-General, had been twice with Sir George Rodney. Then the sale—and the proclamation, which found it necessary to promise protection to buyers, in going and returning, and that their money should not be taken away from them, and that they should be allowed to carry away what they had bought! "Seventeen flags of truce were ordered from various parts to the island," and naval stores were sold to anybody who could pay for them—especially a particular kind of sail-cloth, of which half the sails of every American vessel are made. And "the privateers, like vultures, hovering round the island, waiting for the return of the purchasers, to pick up their purchases." He could prove that the *Convert* frigate was sent to see the purchasers clear of the privateers, by which means the goods got safe to Martinique, "a place which our privateers would never have suffered them to reach if St. Eustatius had remained under the Dutch." In fact, all that the conquest had done was to supply the French and Americans with stores 50 per cent. cheaper than before. As to the cordage, when Rodney could not get cordage, it was only because

there was hardly any on hand. This could be proved by the books seized, as well as by witnesses, who would swear that the English always had the preference at the market.

Burke then came to a more serious aspect of the affair. The two Commanders stayed on at St. Eustatius from the beginning of February to the beginning of May, "occupied in the glorious business of the sales"—the Admiral having 21 sail of the line, and 3000 veteran troops at St. Eustatius, while the French had not 6 sail at Martinique. Surely that was the time for offensive operation? But that time was lost, and the first misfortune that sprang from it was, that Hood was left with an inferior fleet to fight de Grasse. He was too weak even to prevent four of the enemy's ships coming out of Fort Royal and joining de Grasse. So the enemy was strengthened, and our fleet weakened. But for the conquest of St. Eustatius, Fort Royal might have been blockaded, and de Grasse defeated. Tobago would not have fallen, and de Grasse would not have been at liberty to bring on us this dreadful disaster in the Chesapeak. Tobago cotton was the finest in the West Indies—by the loss of that island cotton had risen from 1s. or 1s. 8d. to 3s. or 3s. 9d. Twenty thousand people in Lancashire got their bread by manufacturing cotton, and he ascribed the loss of Tobago to the three months' delay at St. Eustatius.

Rodney rose instantly to reply. He went to St. Eustatius to cut off supplies from the enemy, "and with the fixed resolution not to grant any terms to the inhabitants." The Dutch had been the friends of our enemies—the inhabitants had "a rooted aversion to us, and the most cordial regard for our enemies." Among them were many who called themselves Englishmen—such people deserved no favour, and he had resolved to show them none. But he seized the property for the King—"he wished not for a shilling of it; he had no other idea at the time, but that the whole belonged of right to his country"—all he did was for his country. He was charged with letting the stores, etc., be carried to the enemy's islands, directly, or through the neutral islands; "this was the very reverse of truth," for he had given orders that none should be sold, but all should be sent to his Majesty's yard at Antigua—he examined the clearance of every ship that went out—made her anchor under his stern, and had her examined; and if she had more provisions on board than were necessary for the voyage, they were taken out. As for remaining inactive three months—he had just planned two expeditions against the Dutch Settlements—one against Curaçoa, the other against Surinam, when he received intelligence that 10 or 12 French sail of the

line, with about 70 transports, had been seen steering for Martinique; so he renounced his designs and sent Hood to cruise in the tract of Martinique—"Sir Samuel is as good an officer as myself," so it was no crime to send him, and he thought 15 ships could fight 10 or 12. Unfortunately the intelligence as to numbers was not true, and Sir Samuel was driven so far to leeward that he could not prevent the ships at Fort Royal from joining de Grasse. As soon as he heard of the affair between Hood and de Grasse, he joined the fleet, determined to renew the action if de Grasse would give him opportunity. At Sta. Lucia, his letter was intercepted, and de Grasse was warned. As for Tobago—the whole of the enemy's fleet was at sea, and if he had gone to Tobago, Barbadoes would have fallen. The guns he sent to Tobago the year before had not even been mounted. As for the disaster in America, he would tell the House what he did to prevent it. He sent to the Commander at Jamaica to send the *Prince William* and *Torbay* to America with the greatest despatch—he desired the Commander-in-Chief in America to collect his whole force and meet him with it off the Capes of Virginia—if he could not meet him, to let him know. But no answer was sent to himself or Hood—he himself was then so ill that he was coming home. He sent twice to Jamaica, and three times to the Admiral at New York—one despatch miscarried—he had learned from this always to keep copies of every despatch, for of that he had none.

This not very clear exculpation was followed by one from Vaughan. The General confined himself to what Burke had called "self-acquittal." It was commonly believed he had made a great fortune "by the St. Eustatius business"—on his honour, he never made a single shilling. He locked up the warehouses (for one reason) to prevent plundering, "from which he could scarcely restrain even the troops." And he was afraid of fire, with so many disaffected people about, who "thought themselves injured." If individuals were treated badly, it was without his knowledge, and when grievances were complained of, he redressed them—he gave Mrs. Gouverneur the house and furniture when she applied for them. It would be hard to make him responsible for the conduct of all the persons in the town. As to the Jews, he sent them to St. Thomas' at their own request—when they were taken to St. Kitt's without his knowledge, he ordered their houses and property to be restored to them; that they were well satisfied appeared from an address presented to him from their synagogue, "expressive of their happiness at being under the mild government of George the Third." "Upon the whole, he

had acted to the best of his judgment, and for his country's good, not his own: as he was neither a lawyer nor a merchant, if the business was to be done over again, he did not think he should do otherwise; and therefore, if he had erred, his country would excuse the fault for the intention."

It must be clear that Rodney could not show that his delay at St. Eustatius, and the consequent detachment of ships, did not affect the numbers with which Graves went to meet de Grasse; nor does Vaughan's defence of himself hide the fact of a pretty complete confiscation of the property on the island.

North evidently felt this, for he said he should vote against an enquiry into the confiscation, but did not object to one about the sales. "The American war had, as usual, been described as a war differing from all other wars." He saw no difference in the war, but he saw a great difference in that House—he saw the cause of the enemy espoused. No man with British feelings would join in condemning the hon. Admiral and General.

Fox very angrily said that North had made "the most shuffling shuffle that ever was attempted in the most shuffling times." And as to this war not differing from others—were not its management, its expense, its events different from all others?

North said he did not mean the event, but the principle. Then Burke fell on the unhappy Minister. He wondered how he dared talk of British feelings! He! He! that has ruined the British Empire! The House refused any enquiry.

Next day there was a very informing debate on Hussey's motion for 10,000 additional seamen. Hussey made it an excuse for going into the state of the Navy—on which depended "all the hopes of this country." He demanded that the Admiralty should give an account of ships already in commission, or to be added, and what alterations were to be made. Last summer he had made it his business to look into the "efforts of the Naval Department." In Hampshire, he saw several private yards, where ships of the line could be built. At Chapel, a little place near Southampton, where a 64 and two 44's were building, the master said he could build a 74—had done so twenty-five years ago. "In the royal yard at Portsmouth, he was astonished to see the negligence and inactivity that prevailed; there was no appearance of our being at war with all the great maritime powers of Europe."[1] At Bristol, the

[1] Rodney, at Cawsand Bay, January 1, 1782, complains bitterly of the neglect and unwillingness and disobedience to orders received from the Admiralty—even

master of a dockyard said he could build a line-of-battle ship. And much greater exertions might have been made in manning the Navy—a young landsman, if employed afloat, might be made an ordinary seaman in a year—in two years an ordinary seaman might be made an able seaman. Sir Hugh Palliser once said that but for a combination formed in the dockyards some time ago we might have had half as many ships again. Mulgrave said seamen could not be made in one, two, or three years, and thousands of ordinary seamen could never be made into able ones—"It requires propensity, as well as understanding," and men must begin early. "Rude and barbarous" as seamen are supposed to be, it is not every man who can become an able seaman. And as to the private yards, persons had applied for contracts who could not carry them out. And if there was no hurry or bustle at Portsmouth, that was because all was so regular and orderly. Then, with some inconsistency, he added that in time of war the royal dockyards were pretty much taken up with repairs, so that most of our ships built in war-time *were* built in the private yards. And to show how attentive the Admiralty was, he told the House that very lately orders came from Ostend for building large vessels in the private yards in the river, "for the Emperor's India Company"; but the Admiralty forbade it, and explained to the Imperial Ambassador that we stood in need of every hand that could drive a nail, and could not allow our shipwrights to work for any but ourselves, and the shipwrights were warned that if necessary a law would be made to prevent it.

In reply, Hussey asked what had been the use of all the money we had voted for the Navy? Is it not the duty of the Admiralty to provide against the ordinary losses of the service? Did they suppose we should lose no ships in such a war as the present? It was wonderful we had not lost more—Providence had been extremely kind to us. Keppel agreed as to the able seamen, but thought it very desirable to have landsmen on board, "for they came up slowly to be most serviceable hands." As for taking them away when they began to be useful (an objection urged by Mulgrave), it was a thing he would never do—"he would as soon pick an officer's pocket of his gold, as rob him of the men he had bred

the dockyard officers—faction has descended so low. Rodney's own captain as bad as the rest—"among the slow ones."

"I suppose affairs will go on as usual, and I fear, nothing thought of till too late." On the 7th, he heard of the recapture of St. Eustatius, by two French frigates and 300 men. "I had flattered myself the garrison left there, and the new works, would have rendered it impregnable to a much larger force."

up." This was the fault of the present board—this had divided and distracted the Navy. It had never been done before. That great man, Sir Edward Hawke—whom it was now the fashion to revile, but who was the Father of the English Navy, never did it. It is said our fleet was not as great in his administration as now. "I deny the fact; it was greater." Mulgrave said Hawke was a very great man, but "not formed for descending to the detail of the civil duties of his office." Palliser explained the "combination." It was in 1773, and was created by "the wicked arts of one Lee," an agent of Congress, who gave the workmen money, and supported them while they absented themselves from the King's yards—and so the Admiralty were prevented building as many ships as they wished. He also brought up John the Painter.

Thomas Townshend said if Sandwich was a proper man to conduct the Navy of England, then Lord Hawke must have been the most unfit on earth—for no two characters were ever more opposite. He made fun of all that had been said about John the Painter, "and a Mr. Lee, or Lind, or somebody," the author of a combination fatal to the interests of this country. Do they mean to say they were stopped and defeated by a despicable Mr. Lee? With all the laws of England at their service could they not overcome a paltry little combination, begun and supported by a single individual? To say so was impudence he had not thought even the present Admiralty could have reached!

North said no word about the combination, but did say that let the number voted be what it might, as many men would be employed as could be found. Last year 90,000 had been voted, and 99,845 had been employed—it was only a question of finance. Should Parliament vote £5,200,000 or £5,720,000—a difference of £520,000 in the Ways and Means? Why should the executive be tied down to spend that specific sum on the Navy, when perhaps it might want it for the Army? He then blundered into an admission, and showed his real reason for this moderation. "Some gentlemen might be afraid that great augmentations were to take place in the army, and that consequently the American war was to be pursued with redoubled vigour." Barré said the refusal of this generous offer showed that Ministers meant to put their plan of giving a preference to the Army. General Smith said he must take the credit for giving his country half as many line-of-battle ships as his Majesty's Ministers intended to give in the year—he moved in the India House for building three ships for Government—the proceedings to-day showed how much the nation was indebted to the Company for their munificent present. Fox ridiculed the defence

set up by the Admiralty—that the Navy of England was greater and stronger now than in the last war. "Good God! Was the navy of England of this day to fight the navy of England of that day?" The fact was, the navy of the House of Bourbon was greater than it had ever been, and we had to fight that navy, and that was the only comparison that ought to be made. Mulgrave had made a point of the *Temple*, built at Hull, which went down on a summer's day, in calm weather—let him remember that the *Marlborough*, built in the King's shipyards, went down at the same time.

On the 12th of December Sir James Lowther brought his motion for putting an end to the American war. Are we to persevere in this war, and feed it with more British treasure and British blood? The country is drained, exhausted, dejected. Its heart is against it. But the Speech from the Throne shows that Ministers are determined to persevere. "The surrender of one army only gave them spirit to lose a second; the surrender of a second only instigates them to venture a third. They go on from year to year against the voice of the people of England, because they are fatally supported by a set of men whom they pay for the purpose in this House."

Lowther was not a man whose character or talents lent weight to his motion. But it was seconded by Thomas Powis,[1] a young man, member for the County of Northampton, leader of the country gentlemen, a man of "a most independent and upright mind." He said we had persevered in this war against the voice of reason and wisdom; it was the idol of his Majesty's Ministers—they bowed before it, and sacrificed to it the interests and almost half the territories of the Empire. They told us the resources of the Empire were not exhausted, because their own incomes were not less. At first honest men might have been betrayed into supporting Ministers, in the hope of reducing America to her old obedience, but he could not conceive how "a set of honest, independent gentlemen" could now be found supporting measures by which the Empire had been destroyed. And then, with tremendous effect, he quoted Gibbon's account of the condition of the Roman Empire in the reign of Valentinian III—the government which "ceased to be formidable abroad, and became odious and oppressive at home; the taxes which increased with the poverty of the State; the emperors wasting the resources of the Empire in carrying on wars against rebels they themselves had made; the distant parts of the Empire either driven into revolt or left defenceless; senators corrupted to

[1] Afterwards Lord Lifford.

abuse their trust; discipline relaxed, measures weak, changeable and inconsistent." And under Honorius, how it was the fashion of the Court to resist the voice and entreaties of the people, and Honorius himself was deluded by his officers of State into declaring that he was "for implacable, eternal war." No misfortunes nor calamities could warn them to desist—they persevered, and were ruined. The effect "was perfectly theatrical. A pin might have been heard to drop," as those corrupt senators listened to their own description, and the whole ministerial side of the House seemed dejected. Gibbon was there to hear. Then Powis went on to say that the war was "a war of delusion" from beginning to end. "It is now a war of this sort, then a war of that sort; now a war of revenue, then a war of supremacy; now a war of coercion, then a war of friendship. The people of this country, this House, and particularly the country gentlemen, have been deluded, confounded, abused, and cheated."

North rose at once—it was necessary to undo the terrible effect of Powis' speech.

North began in a very conciliatory tone. He "was willing to declare his sincere and honest opinion, that it would not be wise or right" to go on with the war *as we had done.* But to give it up altogether? The resolution says "all further efforts to reduce the American provinces to obedience." Are our hands to be tied up by sea and land? May we not even keep some posts in America, to carry on the war with France and Spain? May we not take Rhode Island next summer, if we find it more useful than New York? (Here he was proposing, in the old way, to take one post and give up another.) Are British ships to be insulted, beaten, taken by the Americans, and we not to strike a blow? He was ready to promise not to march armies "from north to south, as in a late case"—but that was all he thought it right to tell them. And he thought the motion impolitic and absurd—though no man lamented the war more than himself. The country gentlemen who supported his Majesty's Ministers were actuated by a laudable desire to preserve the just authority of Parliament. They saw it was "a truly British war, carried on upon British principles, and for the true and ultimate interests of Great Britain."

But there was a wavering. Dundas had said he was glad there was to be no more "phantom of an internal, offensive war in America." Germaine professed to be of the same opinion. But he would never sign any instrument which gave Independence—he was determined to leave the people their country. "You will leave us no country!" cried Byng across the House.

Germaine challenged Byng to impeach him—anything rather than an appeal to "the people without doors." If you want a change, do it constitutionally—address the Throne. He knew the Throne would not listen.

Byng repeated his words, and again Germaine said, "Why do you not impeach me?" "Let him look round," said Byng, "and he will see why—he will see a band of hired men ready to support him or any Minister who will pay them, against all the consequences of the American war. Give us an honest parliament," and then see if the noble lord will wish to be impeached.

And at two in the morning the House once more refused to stop the war.[1]

[1] The numbers (for going to the Order of the Day) were 220 to 179.

On December 21, however, an attempt was made for peace. Hartley went to Lord Guildford (Lord North's father), and through him got to see North. The proposition was to let independence lapse *sub silentio*, and to have a ten years' truce, during which friendly intercourse could be maintained. Hartley left this plan with North, who seems to have thought of it for a moment, foolish and impossible as it was. During the ten years America was not to help France; this showed the real intention of the proposal. One wonders that Hartley lent himself to so base a proposition. It was as foolish as base—America was to stand aside while England beat the French, after which England would be free to renew the war for "reducing" America. Franklin wrote very severely to Hartley upon this.

CHAPTER CXI

THERE MUST BE PEACE

"I own I think Lord G. Germaine's defection a most favourable event. He has so many enemies, that would have made him a heavy load whenever the failure of the expedition under Lt.-G. Burgoyne came to be canvassed in Parliament; yet I never would have recommended his removal unless with his own good will; now he will save us all trouble. The laying it on my bequeathing the Government of Charlemont on Carleton is quite absurd, and shews the malevolence of his mind."[1]—*The King to Lord North*, March 3, 1778.

"If Sir Guy Carleton can be persuaded to go to America, he is every way the best suited for the service. He and Ld. G. Germaine are incompatible. Ld. George is certainly not unwilling to retire if he gets his object, which is a peerage; no one can then say he is disgraced."—*The King to Lord North*, Dec. 26, 1781.

WHEN Cornwallis' surrender shook the North Ministry to its very foundations, the King began to cast about for a Coalition —his resource whenever his chosen Cabinet seemed to be tottering.

The first serious note of alarm was struck by the division of February 2, 1777, after Fox's great speech on the American War. On that occasion Ministers had not attempted to answer him—with cynical insolence they called for the question. But the question revealed a minority 165 strong, and Ministers and King were so much alarmed that on the 10th they brought down the sick to vote for them.

At the end of 1777 and the beginning of 1778 there were many secret negotiations, all conducted with the same hope of rendering Opposition powerless by including it in Administration. It is Rockingham's greatest claim to the title of statesman that he steadfastly refused this bait, even when some of his colleagues wavered. Eden made a determined attempt to capture Fox—who at that time was chiefly averse to act with Germaine, or so Eden represented. But the rumours set about with regard to these negotiations generally had a purpose, and are not to be trusted without corroboration.

[1] Written when Germaine, in a fit of anger, had threatened to resign.

At that time the King was writing to North that his sole wish was to keep him "at the head of the Treasury, and as my confidential Minister"; for that end he would accept anyone who came in avowedly to support North. No man was ever less squeamish about his instruments than George III—the man who came prepared to do his will was always welcome; an angel from heaven, not prepared to do it, would have found no favour in his eyes. If he ever made an exception, that exception was the Earl of Chatham, who had flooded the reign of his grandfather with glory. Him he had determined never to address again but through North. If, however, he would "step forth" to support North, the King would "receive him with open arms." But rather than address himself directly to Chatham, or any member of Opposition, he would lose the crown he wore—"but I do not expect Lord Chatham or his crew will come to your assistance." Opposition would "make me a slave for the remainder of my days,"—and North would be their first victim. "No consideration in life shall make me stoop to Opposition; while ten men in the kingdom will stand by me, I will not give myself up to bondage." He thought the nation would stand by him—"If they will not, they shall have another King, for I never will put my hand to what will make me miserable to the last hour of my life." "I never will accept the services of any part of Opposition, but to strengthen you. To give you ease, I consent to what gives me infinite pain, but any further, even that consideration, cannot make me go, and rather than be shackled by these desperate men (if the nation will not stand by me), I will rather see any form of Government introduced into this island, and lose my crown, rather than wear it as a disgrace."

He was always asking North whether he meant to "desert" him, as Grafton did, at "the hour of danger"? Then came the death of Chatham, and the King's hopes revived. "May not the political exit of Lord Chatham incline you to continue at the head of my affairs?" Will you serve me as Grafton did?[1]

North grew more and more restive—he was intelligent enough to realise the situation. Nature had not intended him for a Tory Minister—the views he held in his heart did not materially differ from those of the old Whigs; it was only his moral inability to withstand the will and the bribes of his King which retained him in office. In his secret heart he thought of the war and its prospects as did Opposition.

[1] Letters to North of March, April, May, and June, 1778.

In 1779, attempts were renewed to "strengthen" Administration. The King was ready to employ anyone who would help him to reduce the Colonies. But the only possible coalition was a coalition for peace.

Richmond's excellent letter to Fox, of February 7, 1779, disposes of the accusation that Rockingham excluded himself from power by insisting on an unreasonable control of every appointment under Government. Richmond says that the proposal made to Opposition was, that Weymouth should have the Treasury, Thurlow the Chancellorship, and that arrangements should be made to take in the principal men in Opposition. North, Germaine, Suffolk, Sandwich, Dartmouth, and perhaps some more, were to "quit their employments," to facilitate these arrangements. They were informed that Weymouth would be "most glad" to have Lord John Cavendish for Chancellor of the Exchequer; but "would take any other we should agree upon"; and Rockingham and his friends "might, by themselves," fill up the vacancies, or take in Grafton, Camden, and Shelburne. But, "the basis of the scheme being a coalition, and Lord Weymouth being at the head of the new Ministry," none of the members of the old Ministry must be attacked "for any part of their conduct"; his Majesty "meant not to suffer any of them to be disgraced"; on the contrary, he intended to confer on them "the vacant blue ribbon, and other marks of favour and approbation." As to measures, none were proposed, except to withdraw the troops from America, and carry on a vigorous war with France. Nothing was proposed for recovering America, nor was India so much as mentioned, nor the reducing the corrupt influence of the Crown, nor future economy.

Commenting on the appointments, Richmond says, "Suppose those who say they mean to give us effectual power, should stipulate to have in each board or department some one man of apparently inoffensive manners, but who (*sic*) from his connections we could but look upon as a spy, would not such a symptom indicate rottenness? and yet it would not be difficult . . . to say we broke off precisely because such or such a private gentleman was not turned out of office." We must know the share of Government we are to have, to enable us to carry out our measures. Otherwise, this "is merely an offer of places without power, under a bargain to screen those whom we have been so long condemning. Such an offer I am sure you will approve of our rejecting with indignation." He adds that it is impossible to forget that Weymouth "has already once abandoned us"; and

that this offer, though *said* to be warranted by the King, comes through a second and third hand. "We cannot judge of the inclination there may be in the King to this change . . . it is very dangerous to commence a negotiation without an absolute certainty of what the King means."

What the King meant is now well known, from his language to North whenever the Minister talked of resigning. George III looked upon the return of the Whigs as his own return to "slavery"; he had more than once talked wildly about hardly caring to wear the crown on such terms as the Whigs would allow him. Moreover, at the very time these offers were being made Weymouth was "making like offers to others." The Whigs showed their prudence when they answered in general terms that "from the complexion of the business we did not judge it proper to enter any farther into it." The same answer had been given in the summer of 1778.[1]

The fact was, the King looked forward to any change with nothing but abhorrence. His whole energy had been expended on obtaining a Ministry such as North's—for years he had intrigued to that end—and if he ever consented to change, it would be from dire necessity, and with the feeling that the comfort and dignity of his life were at an end. Richmond might well exhort the Whigs to be on their guard. They were fighting a whole system—a system of government according to the will of a King who wrought his will by bribery and corruption. How could a coalition with his creatures do any good? How could it do anything but fresh harm?

All through that summer North was trying to resign, and the King was frantically conjuring him to stay. If North went, no man should come into office till he had signed "under his own hand, that he is resolved to keep the Empire entire," and that "no independence shall be allowed." Then came Gower's resignation—Gower, of whom the King had sometimes thought as a possible successor (though "a poor substitute") for North.

This is what Gower said about his motives for resigning—North repeats the conversation to the King, in a letter dated October, 1779. "Lord Gower came to Lord North to inform him that he had long felt the utmost uneasiness at the situation of his Majesty's affairs, that nothing can be so weak as the Government; that nothing is done; that there was no discipline in the state, the army, or the navy; and that impending ruin must be

[1] See Earl Russell's *Life of Fox*.

the consequence of the present system of government; that he thought himself obliged, as well in conscience as in wisdom, to desire an immediate dismissal from his employment; that he had no connection with any of the members of the Opposition, which he thought as wicked as the Administration was weak; that nothing can afford the least hope but a coalition, and he is afraid even that remedy may be too late; that he feels the greatest gratitude for the many marks of royal goodness which he has received, but that he does not think it the duty of a faithful servant to endeavour to preserve a system which must end in the ruin of his Majesty and of the country." To this terrible indictment, North adds another of his own—"*In Lord North's arguments with Lord Gower, Lord North owns that he had certainly one disadvantage, which is, that he holds in his heart, and had held for these three years, just the same opinions with Lord Gower.*"

In the beginning of winter, 1779, North was still trying to escape. Thurlow, Gower, and Weymouth all said there must be an accession of strength if the Ministry was to go on. The King was compelled to tell Thurlow to open negotiations with Opposition. He was to say that the King would "blot out of his remembrance any events that may have displeased him," and consent to a Ministry "on a more enlarged scale"—if only the Empire may be kept entire. Hopes might even be held out that North would not form a part of the "more enlarged" Administration.

Opposition did not jump at the offer. "From the cold disdain with which I am treated," wrote the King to Thurlow, "it is evident to me what treatment I am to expect from Opposition . . . to obtain their support, I must deliver up my person, my principles, and my dominions into their hands."

America was the crux. If the Empire was to be kept entire, the war must go on; Opposition was determined not to incur the responsibility of continuing to exhaust the country in a struggle which now could never end in the restoration of the old order in America.

After the Gordon Riots—when meetings "out of doors" were out of favour—more attempts were made, through Frederick Montagu. But now the King was a trifle less willing. He was dead set against Fox and Richmond, for proposing to shorten Parliaments—even the Civil List would hardly run to the expenses of triennial elections. And "persons must atone for their faults before I can attempt to forgive them"—especially

Richmond, who "has not put his foot into my apartments for *seven* years."

After Yorktown, the King's only fear was lest he should be supposed to have come to his senses. But it was obvious that something *must* be done, somebody must go; and as Germaine was singularly obnoxious on many accounts—his temper sometimes trying even the King, and his persistent enmity to General Carleton seriously interfering with his Majesty's plans—the King consented to his going. But he must be made a peer. "No one can then say he is disgraced," and the change will not be attributed to any change in the King's "sentiments."

During the recess, the *London Gazette* became a veritable Job's messenger of evil tidings. St. Eustatius was recaptured on November 26, "by a handful of the enemy, without the smallest opposition." Demerara and Essequibo surrendered to the French on January 31; de Bouillé took St. Kitt's on February 12. And on the 5th the garrison of St. Philip's in Minorca surrendered to de Crillon, after a desperate resistance.[1] The cause of the British inhabitants of St. Eustatius was not tried in the King's Bench till January 25. The question was, whether their claims should be determined in the Court of Admiralty, or whether the Court of King's Bench could prohibit the Admiralty from proceeding in the various suits already instituted, and leave the claimants to pursue their remedy privately against Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan. Mansfield decided that the Admiralty had the jurisdiction, and the unfortunate captors were "pursued"

[1] "Such was the uncommon spirit of the King's troops, that they concealed their disorders and inability, rather than go into the hospital. . . . Perhaps a more noble, or a more tragical scene, was never exhibited than that of the march of the garrison of St. Philip's through the Spanish and French armies. It consisted of no more than 600 old decrepid soldiers, 200 seamen, 120 of the Royal Artillery, 20 Corsicans, and 25 Greeks, Turks, Moors, Jews, etc. . . . Such was the distressing figures of our men, that many of the Spanish and French are said to have shed tears as they passed them. Thanks to the Almighty, the miserable disorder, which threatened us with destruction, is now abated; the humanity of the Duke de Crillon (whose heart was most sensibly touched by the misfortunes of such brave men) has gone even beyond my wishes, in providing everything which can contribute to our recovery. The Spanish as well as the French surgeons attend our hospitals. We are greatly indebted to the Baron de Falkenhayn, who commands the French troops. We owe infinite obligations to the Duc de Crillon; they can never be forgot by any of us. I hope this young man will never command an army against my sovereign, for his military talents are as conspicuous as the goodness of his heart."—*General Murray's Despatch to Lord Hillsborough, on the surrender of St. Philip's, Minorca.*

there instead of in the King's Bench. This was all that we gained by confiscating a neutral island.

In addition to all this, another British Admiral had found himself out-numbered by the enemy. Kempenfeldt was sent out in December with twelve ships of the line, a 50-gun ship, four frigates, and a fireship, to prevent the Brest fleet from sailing, and to intercept a French convoy bound for the West Indies. He fell in with them off Ushant, on the 12th, and took several of the convoy. But evening came on, "blowing fresh with thick weather," and he could not form his line before dark. At daylight next morning he saw the enemy to leeward, but their force was so superior he did not think it advisable to hazard an action—they were nineteen sail of the line to his twelve!

On the 19th the Marquis of Rockingham moved to delay the granting of any further supplies until the sense of the House was taken, as to how far it was prudent to go on trusting Ministers. Once more he made the dismal comparison of our state in 1763 with our state now. Our commerce was carried on "by chance and stealth." We have no fleets—or when they appear they have to seek safety in retreat. Our armies are captured, or exist only on the papers which lie on the table of the House of Commons. And now the British flag has been tarnished almost in the mouth of the Channel. Admiral Kempenfeldt, after commencing an action, "found himself deceived." He came up with the enemy, and captured a great number of their transports, with troops on board.[1] In endeavouring to capture the rest, the enemy appeared, and an action had commenced, when Kempenfeldt saw that he was opposed by nineteen ships of war—four of them of 110 guns, and one of 112. Rockingham was very severe on the attempt made in the King's Speech to represent recent events in India as "successes." He himself had received an account of the real state of British affairs there, "full as recent and as genuine." Sir Eyre Coote had in truth no army—he had "an handful of men," which he had to employ in detachments, and with them he had managed to keep at bay a force of some hundred thousands, and had made them feel the superiority of British skill and discipline.

In this debate Sandwich once more declared he had never said he ought to lose his head if our fleet did not equal those of France and Spain; all he had said was, that it ought to be the

[1] "The captured ships are chiefly laden with artillery and ordnance stores, and have on board between 900 and 1000 troops."—*Report of Sir Richard Pearson of the "Arethusa," who brought the despatches.*

object of Government to keep the Navy on as respectable a footing as possible, and make it equal in Europe "to the navy of Bourbon, whenever it could be done."

On the 17th Burke moved to consider the case of Mr. Laurens, still a prisoner in the Tower—a close prisoner, not allowed to see his friends or family.[1] For three months he was refused pen and ink—at last he was allowed to draw bills, and at the same time a bill for £99 was presented to him for "fees." Laurens said to the man who presented it, "Friend, I believe I shall be obliged to quit my lodgings, for really they are too dear for me." Was it prudent to treat Mr. Laurens like this? He had been "at the head of the greatest commonwealth on the face of the earth"; he was an Ambassador from that Commonwealth. He loved this country so, that he sent his children to be educated here—his countrymen had reproached him with being too favourable to England. We ought to have blessed Heaven that such a man had fallen into our hands, that we might avail ourselves of his goodwill. Even in the Bastille, "a ridiculously grand" provision was made for prisoners—a British Government had refused any allowance to Mr. Laurens. There had been a difference of late—since Mr. Laurens' son had the custody of Lord Cornwallis, and was treating him the very reverse way we were treating the father, who was locked up in a prison of which Lord Cornwallis was governor! Ministers then became full of civility; but he was authorised to say that Mr. Laurens would sooner starve than be obliged to men who had treated him thus. When Congress heard of it they demanded the return of General Burgoyne (here Burke said he had of late conceived the highest esteem for Burgoyne). On this, Clinton tried to exchange the General, but there was no officer of his rank in the American army, so it was agreed that 1040 men

[1] "The Representation and Prayer of Henry Laurens, a native of South Carolina, some time recognized by the British Commissioners in America, by the style and title of his Excellency Henry Laurens, President of Congress, now a close prisoner in the Tower of London." It "represented" that the petitioner had "for many years, at the peril of his life and fortune, evidently laboured to preserve the ancient friendship between Great Britain and the Colonies"; that he never "excited the dissentions which separated them"; that he had "extended every act of kindness in his power to persons called Loyalists and Quietists, as well as to British prisoners of war"; and can prove this. That he was committed to the Tower on the 6th of October, 1780, "being then dangerously ill"; and had "suffered under a degree of rigour almost, if not altogether, unexampled in British modern history." Perhaps there was some excuse for "our friends" in America not being more zealous in our cause.

would be given for him. But Government contrived to upset this, by insisting on counting the prisoners taken at the Cedars. Congress had always refused to ratify that capitulation, and in every exchange of prisoners had always put the Cedars' men aside as "so many Birmingham halfpence." So Burgoyne would have had to return if Burke had not bethought himself of writing to Dr. Franklin. Franklin replied that he thought the order for Burgoyne's return was probably retaliation for the refusal to exchange Laurens. He had just been authorised to exchange Burgoyne for Laurens, and he asked Burke to negotiate the business. Burke was told that Burgoyne was already exchanged —a falsehood on the face of it, as Congress would not have made this offer if he had been.

Lord Newhaven said Burke ought to be sent to the Tower to keep Laurens company, for daring to write to Dr. Franklin, an open and avowed rebel, and to read his letter to the House.

Yet this war did not differ from other wars! There was never one impulse of generosity to an enemy all through the American war. The meanness of the British Government (or was it of George III?) seemed inexhaustible.

It is piteous to see the King catching at straws in the attempt to persuade himself that, whether America be lost or no, he need not lose his Ministers. The Address being carried "by a considerable majority," shows him that the House retains "that spirit for which this nation has always been renowned." That some "principal members" have "wavered" does not surprise him. He has already ordered Germaine to "put on paper" the mode that seems most "feesible" for conducting the war—we must not have "fluctuating counsels." He still thinks "a good end" may be made to the war. "When men are a little recovered of the shock felt by the bad news," they will see the necessity of going on — though we may alter the mode.[1] He revives still more when the motion for delaying Supplies is lost by 95 — Parliament and the public will now see "where those desperate men are driving."

But after the vote on Lowther's motion, he begins to be uneasy. He does not like North's words about not undertaking any more great operations — he sees that this is impossible "as things are situated," and North had to say it; but it will "encourage the rebells," and they will attack our posts, which otherwise they would have been afraid to do. The "very great

[1] Letters of November 28, 1781.

majority" on the Army Estimates (166 to 84) shows him that "the country gentlemen" begin to see that the war must go on. It had become alarmingly manifest that they were wavering. At their head was Thomas Powis. In the middle of the debates on the Army Estimates, Powis seconded Lowther's Resolution that the war in America had been ineffectual, and the ministerial majority went down to 44.

As Clinton had resigned (and was coming home to have it out with Cornwallis), a new Commander-in-Chief must be appointed for America. The King wanted Carleton—in every respect the best man—but he was afraid Germaine would not have him. The King felt that he must form a "digested opinion" before he could state his thoughts to Germaine. He knew that Carleton and Germaine were "incompatible." But Germaine was not unwilling to retire "if he gets his object, which is a peerage; no one can then say he is disgraced." So ready was the King to pardon the man who had brought disgrace after disgrace on the British arms! But he was now in a hurry to get rid of Germaine; and if Lord North "thought the American Secretary might cease," perhaps Hillsborough could take on the American business.

So, very soon after Parliament reassembled, the *Gazette* announced that Lord George Germaine was now Viscount Sackville. Such was the reward of his eminent services to his country, beginning at Minden. But the King had to get rid of him somehow—Dundas was refusing to serve with him any longer; and his "rancours" caused trouble at every turn. Even the King was tired of them—but to dismiss him would be to own that he had better not have taken to his councils the man his grandfather had thought unworthy to serve, "in any capacity whatever."

Germaine asked that any mark of favour might precede his resignation, and that he might have three days' notice before the seals were required of him. The King thought this very reasonable. Germaine may have wanted time to hunt for the despatch that never was sent!

The Lord Advocate was also giving trouble—still using the language of Opposition, and blaming Ministers for indecision and disunion. The rats were preparing to leave the ship.

North saw that the war could not go on—there must be peace—but he was determined not to be the Minister to make it. His unerring instinct told him that the King would never forgive the Minister who should make peace with America.

The King still saw nothing in the American quarrel, but a wicked rebellion there and a wicked Opposition here. In America, his authority set at nought; in the House of Commons, an "unprincipled" party daring to attack his prerogatives of bribery and corruption. Though he was the third of his House to sit on the throne of England, he abhorred the conditions on which he sat there with an abhorrence as deep as ever Stuart felt.

He loved those, and those only, who did his will; and he loved them only as long as they consented to do it. No injury to the country, or to his own honour, excited his resentment as did any resistance to himself. Germaine had lost an army, Sandwich had frittered away the navy, and set it together by the ears; but they were "King's Friends," and if he gave them up, it was that he might keep North, not because they had mismanaged his affairs. As often as he was forced even to think of giving them up, he talked of retiring to Hanover, and had the royal yacht got ready. He would be one of the famous exiled kings! Or he would banish the Commons—he alternated between imitating the examples of Charles the First and James the Second. The American dispute fanned his smouldering love of domination into a flame. Rather than make the smallest concession to those who withstood him, he risked an actual rebellion. Rather than yield anything then, he allowed rebellion to grow into war; and when he had blundered into war, he pursued that war with a disregard of all prudence, and the more unfortunate his arms, the more impracticable he became. His fixed idea was never to yield. In his eagerness to rid himself of some of his other enemies in Europe, that he might be able to concentrate his efforts on his American rebels, he was ready to restore Gibraltar to Spain![1]

Yet he could see clearly enough. He was less deceived than he seemed. He knew that the game was up. Even before the news of Cornwallis' surrender came he had said to Lord Hertford, "I know that my enemies are superior everywhere." To the persistency of Opposition the country owed it that it had not to choose between the destruction of the Constitution and another rebellion.

The new session opened on the 24th of January, 1782, with Fox's Motion for an Enquiry into the Want of Success of the British Navy. The debates on this, which went on

[1] He told Hertford that he had offered Gibraltar to Spain for peace!

till the 20th of February, may be compared to the first parallel before Yorktown. Fox at once singled out Sandwich. Of all the Ministers in the Cabinet there was not perhaps one so formidable. His situation as First Lord of the Admiralty gave him the influence of a whole profession. But in the East India Company he had another source of influence, which, though not equal to that of the Crown, was sufficient with it, said Fox, to crush any member who should bring a charge against him. The idea that to move for an Address to remove a Minister was to condemn a man unheard, had been adopted. Nothing could be more absurd, more false, more foolish. There was no need to criminate a Minister—it was enough that he was incapable, unfortunate, or disliked. His office is not a freehold! If Parliament dislikes a Minister, it has a right to request his removal. Why should we have less power to dismiss a public servant than to dismiss our domestics? Even if the people were whimsical or capricious, it could never be sound policy to keep a Minister in office against their opinion. It had been said that Sandwich was only retained in office because Opposition tried to turn him out—if so, those who in their hearts believed he could not hold his office with safety to his country, and yet came down to vote for him, were "too bad for any society," much less for representing a free people. And then Fox went into the whole story, from 1777, when it became clear that France meant to aid the Colonies. D'Estaing was allowed to sail from Toulon unopposed. The French and Spanish fleets were allowed to join. The East and West India convoys were lost, by ordering Captain Moutray to touch at Madeira—where he was sure to fall in with the enemy. In 1781 there were five separate instances of gross misconduct. First, de Grasse was allowed to sail for the West Indies without an effort to intercept him. Secondly, the prizes from St. Eustatius were lost through an inadequate convoy. Admiral Rodney had told the Admiralty when it would sail, and that it was perhaps the richest fleet that ever went for England—and though these were the riches, the loss of which he should least regret, it was the duty of the First Lord to protect them. The third charge was the letter to the Mayor of Bristol, when Admiral Darby put back to Torbay, because he had heard from the English master of a Swedish brig that the combined fleets were in the Channel. A Spanish frigate had boarded this man's vessel, but the Admiralty would not believe his story, and wrote an insulting letter to Darby, and

another in answer to the Mayor of Bristol, telling him the fleets were *not* in the Channel, and Darby had only put into Torbay to water. It looked as though Sandwich wanted to ensnare the Bristol merchants into sending their ships to sea—just as he sent Moutray into the hands of Admiral Cordova![1]

The fourth charge was the mismanagement of the Dutch war—"the most foolish, absurd, mad, of all undertakings." And the fifth was the late affair of Admiral Kempenfeldt. Mulgrave, as usual, blustered on behalf of the Admiralty, and the motion was lost by 217 to 236, but the Ministry was shaken, and the resignation of Germaine on the 11th of February at last broke the spell.

The Saltpetre Contract was another job. When questions were asked about it, North begged the House to vote the estimate at once, because time pressed, and next Friday was a holiday; and as the Accounts had been on the table a week, "there was not a member who was not acquainted with them." Burke at once proposed to ask a question or two. "Upon which Lord North candidly confessed that he had not examined the papers." He also professed entire unacquaintance with Townson, who had the contract. Townson was an India Director, *and member for Milborne Port, North's own pocket borough.*

On January 31 there was a debate in the Lords on the hanging of Colonel Isaac Hayne—who had received our protection, and had afterwards been captured in arms against us, and hanged at Charlestown by Lord Rawdon. Abingdon, in an indignant speech, asked the Lords how they could justify "this murder," when "one Arnold, coming into this kingdom with his hands reeking with the blood of his countrymen," was closeted with the King, received at Court, smiled on and caressed, to the disgrace of the British army?[2]

[1] Ministerialists now left off accusing Lord Hawke as the cause of the bad state of the Navy—now it was his predecessor, Lord Egmont, who was so parsimonious. All agreed that in Hawke's time "all was cordiality, affection, and zeal," and that now "the navy was torn by dissentions," officers never saw each other except on duty, and "had no access to the tables of their superiors."

[2] Hayne's trial was quite irregular—it was a sort of "enquiry," and it is very doubtful whether the prisoner was present at it. He was told at one o'clock that he was to die at six; but on a strong remonstrance from Governor Bull, and some of the inhabitants of Charlestown, was respited for forty-eight hours—on the ground of his clemency to British officers formerly in his power. The extraordinary document which announced his condemnation, added, that if General Greene made any application in his favour, Hayne would be hanged instantly. He was hanged at the expiration of the forty-eight hours, to the eternal

On the 4th of February the Duke of Chandos moved for an Enquiry into the loss of the Army commanded by Lord Cornwallis. Stormont instantly rose and exclaimed that the motion amounted to a recognition of Independence—it stated that Lord Cornwallis surrendered *to the United States of America.* Chandos replied that he had merely copied one of the articles signed by Lord Cornwallis and General Washington. Grafton advised him to alter the words to "*styling themselves* the United States of America"; and Shelburne took the opportunity to declare that he would never consent to acknowledge Independency.

Thus amended, the motion passed, and on March 6 the House went into Committee. Chandos said he would not throw the whole blame on the Admiralty—the Cabinet was ultimately answerable. Why had not Ministers made alliances, instead of sending half a dozen British officers all over Germany to collect a thousand or fifteen hundred mercenaries, "like so many poulterers picking up as many chickens"? Our disasters "press upon my mind"—not only is America lost, but Minorca is gone, and our valuable islands in the West Indies "fall, day after day, like ninepins."

Sandwich said our misfortunes were attributable "solely to accident"—an unhappy combination of circumstances. "The hand of Providence did not seem to favour us." The motion was directed against men in office, "with a view of aspiring at their places." In enumerating our misfortunes, the noble Duke forgot the obstruction people in Administration had met with from Opposition—it was this which "clogged the wheels of government."

Lord Derby, in great wrath, called this an impudent assertion, and was called to order. He asked when had Opposition carried one point? Had one soldier demanded ever been refused? One shilling asked, and not obtained? As for the hand of Providence, Providence had been much more favourable to us than we deserved. Carmarthen asked whether a letter, dated the 6th of July last, and received by the Admiralty the 12th or 13th of the same month, was on the table? It gave an account of the force and time of sailing of de Grasse. (The letter could not be found.) Sandwich read a paragraph from Rodney's letter, on his arrival in Ireland—in which he said he thought the force sent was sufficient to give the enemy a proper check. Richmond said the whole events of 1781 were one continued proof of ignorance and incapacity.

disgrace of Lord Rawdon, but still more of Germaine, who was the inspirer of these unusual severities.

The motion (that the want of a fleet caused the loss of the army) was lost by two to one.

On the 7th Carmarthen rose to protest against Germaine being made a peer. It was a dishonour to the peerage! He had in his hand a copy of the court-martial's verdict. Abingdon said Germaine had disobeyed the orders of his Commander-in-Chief, in a military capacity, but he had been infinitely more guilty in his civil situation of late years.[1]

The new peer had the assurance to speak. "He held himself to be every way competent to receive the honours he had been so fortunate as to receive. The court-martial sat two-and-twenty years ago. Faction and clamour predominated. He was condemned unheard, and punished before trial. He did not flee like a guilty man—he insisted on a trial, though the persons who tried to dissuade him warned him that the sentence might be capital.

On this occasion, Shelburne made a very strange speech, often brought up against him afterwards. After telling the House that he had suffered many professional injuries from Germaine, but called God to witness he had never tried to injure him in return, and therefore hoped his words would not be attributed to "an old hatred of twenty years' standing," he added—apparently apropos of nothing—that "*he had not the smallest objection to the King's being his own Minister.*" He did not know but the King's having an opinion of his own might be better for the commonweal than his being a mere "King of Mahrattas"—in case their lordships did not know what that was, it was a mere nominal monarch. "He had his *pechaw*, a cabinet who were efficient," and to all intents and purposes held the reins of government, while they kept the King locked up, "and in pretty nearly a state of ideotism." Then—perhaps thinking he had better say something on the other side—he declared "he wished to God to see Parliament free." A "high-toned prerogative prince, and a servile corrupt parliament was the strongest symptom of despotism." He therefore anxiously wished to see a perfect representation of the people.

[1] "This Court, upon due consideration of the whole matter before them, is of opinion that lord George Sackville is guilty of having disobeyed the orders of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, whom he was by his commission and instructions directed to obey as commander in chief, according to the rules of war: And it is the farther opinion of the court, that the said lord George Sackville is, and he is hereby adjudged, unfit to serve his Majesty in any military capacity whatever."—*Sentence of the Court-Martial after Minden.*

CHAPTER CXII

THE 27TH OF FEBRUARY AND THE 8TH OF MARCH, 1782

"The method taken by the noble lord of confining loans to the hands of a few persons, was, he said, the completest manœuvre that could be played off; for under that dark cloak lay all his douceurs to contractors, placemen, members of parliament, etc., and plainly shewed how the majorities on the motions respecting the American war were procured."—*Fox on the Budget*, Feb. 25, 1782.

"The effect of Conway's speech was incredible, considering how steeled had been the majority of hearts in that House, but their interest had softened them now. It is easy to persuade men to repent when it is for their present advantage . . . the fall of Lord George Germaine had made the fabric totter, and the rats ran away."—Walpole, *Last Journals*, Feb. 27, 1782.

If Fox's motion on the ill-success of our naval affairs may be compared to Washington's first parallel at Yorktown, General Conway's motion of February 22nd, for putting an end to the American War, may certainly be compared to the second. Conway made the appointment of a new Secretary for America the reason for insisting on Ministers declaring their policy. The new Secretary, though not a young man, was still possessed of youthful vigour—what did he mean to do? Would he renew the war? Were we to have a new plan, or to go on with the old? Conway had it on good authority that there were persons "very near at hand disposed to treat for peace." He had also reason to believe America was inclined to treat. We were paying for 73,000 men, said to be employed in America—a force only existing on paper. By the last returns it appears that Sir Henry Clinton has 9300; 5400 were captured in Virginia. So every soldier actually employed in America costs us £100 a year. After saying that the man who did not wish for peace in the present distress, not only had not a heart, but had not a soul, Conway moved for an Address to his Majesty, praying him to listen to the advice of his Commons, that the war in America be no longer pursued for the impracticable

object of reducing that country to obedience by force. Lord John Cavendish seconded.

Then Ellis rose. He said, though a very old member of Parliament, he was a very young Minister, and he asked the indulgence of the House. He always thought the war was just in its origin, and events had not changed his opinion. But he never imagined—nor, he believed, did any man in that House ever imagine—that America could be reduced by force; his idea was that in America we had many friends, and by supporting them we could destroy the faction which from ambition or a dislike to monarchy wished for war. He still believed our friends were numerous—he would not pledge himself, but he believed it. But he confessed a revolution had taken place in his mind—he was not so sanguine of success as he was—nor did he think the confession disgraced him. A statesman ought not blindly to adhere to opinions merely because he once supported them. He would be glad to see peace restored—if it could be done with safety and honour. He had heard of no overtures—but then he had been so very short a time in office. But if the House wanted a test of the Government's intentions, that test was the vote for the army—an army had been lost, but Parliament had not been asked to replace it, so it was obvious that only "confined operations" were intended. Every man wished for peace—but was it well to tell the enemy we were tired out? To make him feel the burdens of war was the surest way to make him wish for peace. He objected to calling the war the American War. He called it the French War; for, if he was not greatly mistaken, the whole of the Continental army under General Washington was fed, clothed, and paid by France—so it was France, not Congress, that was fighting in America. And if France was fought last war in Germany, he did not see any solid objection to fighting her this war in America.

Burke said the only new thing in the new Secretary's speech was, that this was "a French War." A new arrangement had been made, that a peerage might be conferred on a man who had dismembered his country; that the American War might be converted into a French War; "and that an old man might be changed into a new minister!" We were to go on persecuting the Americans now, not to reduce them, but to reduce the French! The right hon. gentleman, before he had been many hours among them in his new capacity, thought so meanly of Parliament as to believe they would suffer this insult of going on with the American War under a new name. Burke said Ellis was "Germaine's universal legatee." He had succeeded to Germaine's hopes, his

intelligence, his knowledge of our numerous friends, his total ignorance of everything that tended to peace.[1] He had said he had great reason to believe we had numerous friends in America—the reason was, that the right hon. gentleman was already in possession of all the noble lord's refugees—£72,000's worth of refugees had come to him as part of his inheritance. "Oh, that we could come to the happy moment when Ministers would cease to talk of our friends!" Our friends have done all the mischief. Every calamity of the war has arisen from our friends. He wished to God we might hear of them no more! What had they done for us? Had they brought us a single bullock, a single bushel of Indian corn? No; they drew us in the north to Saratoga, in the south to Yorktown. What was the right hon. gentleman thinking of? The Tenth Article of the Capitulation? Were we to make other Tenth Articles, to give up what few friends we might still have left? Then Burke read extracts from Germaine's letters to Clinton, and other confidential correspondence in America, dated January, February, and March of last year, in which he assured them that all was perfectly safe—nothing need be feared from France—and therefore suggested another expedition like Burgoyne's, to be undertaken from Canada by General Haldiman. All this just at the time de Grasse was sailing from Brest with the armament which captured Cornwallis! In February he knew nothing of the armament which sailed in March! He received all his American intelligence from France, and his French intelligence from America. He recommended Sir Henry Clinton, when the exchange of prisoners was stopped, to send the American prisoners to the West Indies, "because there was a great mortality reigned among them in that intemperate climate." This was how he laboured to regain the affections of America!

Turner said the poorer people of England were so reduced by the American War that farmers were glad to sell their corn as fast as they could thresh it, merely to support themselves. Barré quoted Cornwallis' despatches to show we had no friends in America—he could not get a hundred to arm for him in North Carolina. To prove "the deceit" that Ministers had shown in the whole course of the war, he read a paper written by Sir Grey

[1] "The right hon. gentleman had told the House exactly the story which he had told for five years. He had, for a long time, in an inferior order of ministerial existence, crawled upon the leaves of the American system; but now, like the caterpillar, he had left the chrysalis state, his wings had broke from their foldings, and now expanded, he took his flight; but though his appearance was different, the creature was the same."

Cooper (North's secretary) in 1775, at North's express desire, to be shown to Congress. After giving particulars of the power of this country, it said that so high was the spirit of the nation that Ministers could not procure for America any concessions from Parliament, if they wished it ever so much. And at the very time this paper was written, Ministers were presenting to Parliament proposals for conciliation!

Ministerialists made a miserable defence. Adam—an able lawyer—called the motion unconstitutional—the House had a right to examine into the past, but must not dictate measures. This was saying that Parliament may enquire into disasters, but must do nothing to prevent them. Jenkinson said, if we withdrew our forces, America would attack us in her turn. North never attempted to deny the paper written for him by Cooper; he only talked about the sincerity of his "wishes" for peace. When he made the proposals of 1775, he sincerely "wished" for peace.

At two in the morning the House divided. The numbers were, for General Conway's motion, 193; against it, 194. "Majority for the American War, 1."[1]

As soon as the division was announced, Fox gave notice that the question would be brought forward again. He did not doubt it would then be carried. The voice of the people must be heard before the noble lord in the blue ribbon opened his Budget. Barré complained of "the indecent conduct" of the noble lord, in giving notice of the Budget "in a thin House of a Friday, for the next Monday." Barré got very angry—called North "the scourge of his country," said he had drained its resources, spent its cash, and reduced it almost to beggary; he had ruined Great Britain as a State, and his conduct to that House was insulting and intolerable. To come to the House to propose a new loan was "most indecent and scandalous."

North was roused—he interrupted Barré. He had been so used to language from that quarter—so extremely uncivil, so brutal, so insolent——

"There was a great uproar—Chair and Opposition calling to order." At last Thomas Townshend spoke to order, and said he had never seen such a total disregard of decency as the noble lord had been guilty of. The hon. gentleman attacked him on public grounds—the Minister, "a servant of the public—a servant of that House"—dared to call a member of the House insolent and brutal for saying what he and every other member had a right to say to any one of the King's Ministers. "He was proceeding,

[1] *Parliamentary History.*

when Lord North begged pardon of the House"—but not of the hon. gentleman, "whose unhandsome language had forced from him the exceptionable words," and "was addicted to treating him in a style of peculiar harshness." The Speaker said the House had a right to an apology, "and the more comprehensive it was made, the more it was likely to give general satisfaction." At last North apologised "without any exception," and the weary House went home to bed.

On the Monday,[1] North "opened his budget," and "entered on the arduous business of the Loan." After reminding the House how much they had already voted (£8,063,285, 12s. 9d.), he told them that "still very considerable sums" were wanted for "miscellaneous services." The sum arising from the sale of the French prizes, "was to be sure a mere trifle, it was only £10,000." But the sales in the ceded islands "had turned out better than he expected"—say, £5000. The upshot being that he was there to propose a Loan of thirteen and a half millions. Gentlemen had thought proper to say that by the distribution of last year he had made himself friends—but the fact was, for one friend he had made twenty enemies. They were all dissatisfied—those who got some scrip felt such resentment at not getting more that they never thought of thanking him! Last year 1145 persons applied for scrip—this year 2469, and their offers amounted to over 72 millions. No doubt three-fourths were solvent men; but if he accepted their offer how was he to make the distribution? He himself might not be acquainted with their circumstances; if he went for advice to a friend, it would be said the friend had the distribution of the Loan. (And he knew that if he did not apply to a friend, "it would be said he had."[2]) He therefore had resolved not to distribute it in any shape or form—so to avoid the calumny heaped upon him last year. There were only three ways of raising a loan: by accepting offers made by private individuals; by an open subscription; or by a close subscription. He thought the open subscription better suited to times of peace—there was a less bonus, but a less risk. Still, in a close subscription men might try to avail themselves of the distresses of the public, "and insist on exorbitant interests and douceurs." He had, however, adopted it.

Two different sets of gentlemen had made him proposals—neither party knowing of the offers of the other. The Governor and Deputy-Governor of the Bank were present, and several other

[1] February 25.

[2] It was said in 1781 that Robinson had the distribution of the Loan.

gentlemen "of eminence in the mercantile world," and they all agreed that the proposal he had closed with was more advantageous than the other, and more favourable to the public than the bargain of last year—"which he owned to be extravagant." Indeed, he thought the terms "infinitely better than those of last year." As to the Lottery, he had heard so much of the gambling it caused that he had resolved to give it up. But then he had recollected that those who are filled with the spirit of gambling will always find means; so, as it was of considerable advantage to the public, he had resolved to let it stand, but would readily concur in any measure that should be pointed out to check the gambling it might occasion. For instance, he thought of doubling the sum to be paid for a licence. But he "imagined afterwards" that though this would make fewer lottery-offices, just as much gambling would go on. Then he thought of having all shares of tickets stamped, with a tax on the stamp—but then he recollected that gamblers always trust one another, and this would defeat the end of such a regulation. So he went on, explaining the futility of his own devices to prevent the consequences of his own policy. He had been doing this for twelve years, in great international affairs.

Opposition admitted that the terms were better than last year, but they commented severely on a bargain virtually made between four persons—Byng said it might almost be said, two, and "if he had said, one, he would not have been far from the truth." Last year so many persons without property subscribed, that 7 millions of scrip was carried to market in one month, to the very great depreciation of the funds. Fox asked if the way to make a bargain was to conceal that there was another offer? Smith the banker told the House the circumstances of the offer made "by the second set of gentlemen." The London bankers, seeing the injury they might sustain from the partial distribution of so large a loan, met, and determined to make Government an offer. A committee waited on North, who told them if their offer was lower than the other it would be accepted —if the same, the other would be preferred. Four of the committee of nine were for withdrawing — as they could not expect "fairness or justice." Smith was one of the four. The others thought that for the sake of the public they ought to make their offer. Smith did not go into the room where the noble lord was, as he disapproved of the business, but he was given to understand that the others offered to take the whole, or any part, "at £2 premium, and, if it should be higher, to restore the surplus." This offer was rejected. The gentlemen to whom the

loan was given "had claims of a nature peculiar to themselves"; one of them "was distinguished by having made a fraudulent contract with the minister. It was curious to see the noble lord make another bargain with a person who had so deceived him."

All that North replied was, that he did not hear the gentlemen say they would take the loan at £2 per cent. premium. Alderman Harley confessed that he was the author of the first—and accepted—proposal. He admitted the extravagance of last year's terms—"undoubtedly it turned out that the douceur was too great." He had proposed "moderate terms"—to take 7 millions at a premium of from 2 to 3 per cent. Burke reminded him that last year he had supported the most enormous loan ever brought to any Parliament. The present bargain was only a safer way of making a bargain "equally advantageous to influence."[1]

An eventful day was at hand. On the 27th of February—after the Sheriffs of London had presented a Petition against the American War—General Conway moved: That the further prosecution of offensive war in North America, to reduce the revolted colonies by force, will weaken the efforts of this country against her European enemies, and increase the mutual enmity so fatal to the interests of Great Britain and America. He began his speech by showing how false was the contention that the Commons must not advise the Crown—from the days of Edward III downwards, Parliament had at all times given advice, both in war and peace. He gave instances, and asked who could contend against "such a torrent of precedents"?[2] He exposed the wretched quibbles about what was an "offensive war." An offensive war was a war in which an army tried to possess itself of that which it had not before. He had not asked that we

[1] In his speech this day, foreshadowing the new taxes, North mentioned that a sum of £10,000 must be granted "for rebuilding Newgate," and another for "American sufferers" of £68,439, 16s. This, he said, was more than last year—which "was only" £57,912, 10s., "but the reason was that a considerable number of the sufferers had been ordered to return," and they had, he was free to own, obeyed cheerfully. It was always customary to grant them one year's "salary," and a quarter in advance for the expenses of their passage, which occasioned £10,000 more this year, "consequently next year there would be a saving of that £10,000, and should they stay in America, the whole sum would be annually saved; but on the contrary if they were obliged to return, undoubtedly they must again receive the like pension. "There was also £3000 for the British Museum." North also told the House that "the saltpetre contract with Mr. Townson was entirely put an end to."

[2] Richard II and Henry IV, "frequently." Henry VII, as to supporting the Duke of Brittany against France; James I, respecting the Palatinate, the Spanish Match, etc. Charles I; Charles II; William III, and Anne.

should withdraw our troops from places they actually held—perhaps he rather condemned such a measure. He might be asked, what kind of war could be carried on by holding posts? He answered, no kind of war whatever, except self-defence—such as General Eliott wages at Gibraltar. He was against the changing of posts—it would subject us to enormous expense.

It had been said this was now a French war. If so, we were doing a most impolitic thing—we were fighting France at arm's length, and she, with 5000 troops that do not cost her more than £40 a man a year, is maintaining the war against us with 73,000 at £100 a year a man. There appeared to him a fourth kind of war, at which nature shuddered—he meant an Indian war, for he was well assured that a new place had been created—an "Inspector of Indian affairs"—and he did not think, in times like the present, it was a sinecure. In the name of God, what was the motive of Ministers? "Did we suppose that by the infernal plan of desolation, of burning, ravaging, slaughtering, and ravishing of these oppressed people, we could ever make them love us?" We are not, as a noble lord said (Mulgrave), "the glory and envy of every other nation,"—we are the ridicule and contempt of every Power on earth. In last Friday's debate, an hon. gentleman (Sir Horace Mann) said he had lately been in company on the Continent, and was asked of what country he was. When he said an Englishman, "they all sneered and turned up their noses." Afterwards, in another company, it was whispered he was an American, and he was caressed by everyone. Such is the opinion formed of us for our despicable measures!

Then he adjured the House to make peace before it was too late. We are very near the end of our resources. At that very moment, while he was speaking, he was afraid some dreadful blow was preparing—he was given to understand that a fleet of forty sail of the line, partly French and partly Spanish, had put to sea for some great expedition. How many more human sacrifices did these Ministers look for? He had drawn two motions—one in the shape of a Resolution, the other of an Address to the Crown. Last time the fate of the question was decided by a single vote. No one who wishes well to his country will be absent now—absence will be little short of treachery.

Lord Althorpe seconded. Several members spoke in favour of the motion, the last being Horace Mann, who said he had once supported the war, but his eyes were now opened—he saw

it would be madness to pursue it any longer; if we did not end it soon, it would put an end to our political existence.

The question was loudly called for. No one rose. The Speaker had ordered strangers to withdraw, and was beginning to read the motion, when North begged gentlemen to moderate their ardour till he had delivered his sentiments. He wanted peace—but how was it to be brought about? We must consider the war in two points—"the war in America, and the war with America." Nobody said the troops ought to be withdrawn. And *can* we make peace? But to convince the House that he wanted it, he would promise to send out no more troops—only recruits just to keep up the garrisons. If the House did not trust Ministers, why did it not address the Crown to remove them? If the House meant to prescribe how the war was to be carried on, let them give their orders, but let them be clear—not like the late Motion for an Address. And as to peace, there were greater difficulties than gentlemen were aware of. Who could say that America *could* make peace? If France fed and paid her army, could she make peace when she pleased? [This was the very argument which Opposition had urged as a reason for making peace with America before France came in. Ministers then said that France would not come in.] He had always said that Independence would be an empty name—America would only change masters. If France must be reduced before America can treat, nothing will weaken us more than keeping our army in America with their swords tied up. It would not be proper to explain himself—he was not speaking to that House alone, but to America, France, Spain, Holland, and all the world—it would not be proper to say what orders might be given, what alliances were in agitation. The Bill for shutting the ports of America would stand in the way even of a truce—while that Bill existed, confiscating all American property in ships, no truce could be safe at sea. The House would very soon see if Ministers were sincere in promising to send out no more troops; and if they proved insincere the present motion could be renewed. He asked for delay—to "give Ministers a trial."

Never surely did a Minister stoop to such self-abasement as to ask a House of Commons to wait and see whether he was telling it a lie! Conway had spoken of "cloven tongues," and said that the very members who supported North in Parliament condemned him in coffee-houses. North said he did not believe the hon. member was rightly informed—at least he did not "wish" for such friends, and did not "believe" he had such. He wished

to stand on the merits of his cause; he wished the House to vote on the dictates of their own judgment. The removal of Ministers was no punishment—"thank God, mere disgrace in a ministerial sense is no crime!"

Wallace, the Attorney-General, proposed to adjourn the debate, to repeal the Prohibitory Acts. There must be a truce—then the ships of America will again fill our ports, commerce will return, affections will be renewed—we may have a peace founded on commercial treaties. We may enjoy something more substantial than the name of supremacy without the power, and America may enjoy all the blessings of independence consistent with her old connection with Britain. Let us by all means have a truce, and let us adjourn this debate for a fortnight!

The debate then revived. Pitt asked whether Ministers had ever given a promise that was not falsified? Did any two Ministers ever agree on any one point? There was "an incessant variation, shuffling, and trifling." Dunning called North's speech "an incomprehensible harangue," and said he did not understand a syllable of it. The truce is only proposed to bring over "three or four undetermined votes," who would support Ministers if in any shape they would get rid of the American War. It is a miserable stratagem. Fox, too, called it "a paltry stratagem to gain a week, or a day of breath."

The ministerialists were catching at the straw held out by Wallace. But it was useless. At half-past one the House divided. Adam and Robinson were tellers for the Ministry; Byng and Lord Maitland for Opposition. The numbers were: for the Attorney-General's Motion for Adjournment, 215. Against, 234. *Majority against Ministers*, 19.

Then Conway's motion was put, and carried without a division. He instantly moved for an Address to the Crown, in the words of the original motion. This also was carried without a division.[1]

The very next day the Attorney-General moved for leave to bring in a Bill "to enable his Majesty to conclude a Peace, or Truce, with the revolted colonies in North America." It was agreed to, almost without a word.

[1] "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to return his Majesty the thanks of this House for his most gracious Answer to their Address presented to his Majesty on Friday last, and for the assurances his Majesty has most graciously been pleased to give them of his intention, in pursuance of the advice of this House, to take such measures as shall appear most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, etc."

On the last day of February, came almost certain (and too true) news of the fall of St Christopher's; and three days afterwards of the surrender of Minorca.

On the 1st of March, when the Commons went up with the Address to the King, his Majesty had the incredibly bad taste to receive them with Arnold "close to his right hand."[1] On their return to the House, Lord Surrey said it was a wanton insult to the people. But it was not wanton—it was intended as a studied mark of his Majesty's displeasure at the Address.

The King's reply was far more ungracious than it appears on the pages of the Debates. He said he would take "such measures as shall appear to ME (with a stress on the *me*) most conducive to the restoration of harmony."[2] Fox said, if the King had been unopposed, he would soon have come to *lettres de cachet*![3] There was not a word in his reply which would not have been equally appropriate, if he had been on the point of sending 100,000 men to America.

On the 4th, Conway, lamenting that the Reply was not more explicit, moved an Address of Thanks for the assurance of an intention to restore harmony. It was carried *nem. con.*, and then Conway moved, "That after the solemn declaration of this House in their humble Address, presented to his Majesty on Friday last, this House will consider those who endeavour to frustrate his Majesty's paternal care for the happiness of his people, by advising, or by any means attempting the prosecution of offensive war in America, AS ENEMIES TO HIS MAJESTY AND THIS COUNTRY."

[1] "... placing almost at the King's elbow a man perhaps the most obnoxious to the feelings of the Americans of any in the King's dominions, at the moment the House was addressing his Majesty to put an end to the American War."—*The Earl of Surrey*, March 1, 1782.

"Arnold's being behind the King's chair when the Address came up gave great offence. ... The King beheld them come up the room with a very steady countenance, and one which expressed a good deal of firmness. I have been told by several that he is shrunk, and does not look well. I have heard that the Chancellor sat up with him the other night till 5 in the morning."—*Selwyn to Lord Carlisle*, March 1, 1782. (MSS. of the Earl of Carlisle, pp. 586-7.)

"At the levée, Charles presented an Address from Westminster. The King took it out of his hand without deigning to give him a look even, or a word; he took it as you would take a pocket handkerchief from your *valet de chambre*, and passed it to his lord-in-waiting, who was the Duke of Queensberry. ... The King looked much displeased with Mr. Conway, the mover, at the right of the Speaker."—*Selwyn to the Earl of Carlisle*, March 1, 1782. *Ibid.*

[2] "To *me*, said he emphatically."—WALPOLE.

[3] "Indeed, indeed, it is intolerable to think that it should be in the power of one blockhead to do so much mischief."—*C. J. Fox to Fitzpatrick*, September 9, 1781.

After Althorpe had seconded, North said he did not rise to oppose the motion, though he could not agree that it was necessary—it only strengthened what was strong enough already. The majority of the House had resolved on peace. It was hardly possible a Minister should be found hardy, daring, infamous enough to advise his Sovereign to differ from his Parliament,—but orders, the breach of which drew on Ministers the infamy of being deemed enemies to their King and Country, ought to be so clear that Ministers could not mistake them. The resolution was "clouded with obscurity." If he understood right, the object of the late Address was peace with America, and all the measures Ministers should advise were to be calculated to effect that object as soon as possible?

Here several voices cried "No!" and Conway explained that the motion did not mean we were to seize the first opportunity of making peace that might offer, but only instantly to forego offensive war with America. Lord Howe wanted the word "attempt" changed to "direct," so as to throw the responsibility on Ministers. Otherwise officers of the army might be embarrassed by conflicting duties. Pulteney said we should have a corporal refusing to obey orders, because they were the orders of Parliament. William Pitt said he hoped no one thought Ministers were too big for punishment. Fox expressed his entire dissatisfaction with the King's Answer. "Such measures as shall appear to him," means such measures as shall appear to his late Ministers. The noble lord said the other evening that if the voice of the House were against him, he would leave his place. We have heard to-day that Minorca is lost, and 1500 men have surrendered prisoners of war—to make this more criminal in Ministers, several regiments were on their way to relieve the post. In the last war the loss of this island drove a much greater Ministry than this from its place.[1] The nation did not then suffer disgrace and calamity without calling their rulers to account. Were they now so habituated to defeat that they bore loss without a complaint? He had heard another report that day—that the most important island remaining to us in the West Indies, except Jamaica,—he meant St Kitt's,—was taken. He asked Ministers if this was true. "From his soul, he believed that such was their accursed obstinacy, that even when they had lost nine-tenths of the King's dominions, they would not be satisfied till they had mangled and destroyed the tenth!" But he could not help observing with pleasure "the triumph of men in every quarter" at the resolutions of Wednesday. "Exultation,

[1] Admiral Byng was shot for not relieving Minorca.

triumph, hope," were painted in every countenance. The people heard of our victories without emotion—Stocks remained the same; but the instant a victory was gained over his Majesty's Ministers, they went up, because there was a prospect of Ministers going out![1] Two years ago, when the noble lord brought in his Conciliatory Propositions, the funds were not affected—the people hoped for no benefit from anything the Minister undertook. But when Parliament declared it, they instantly proclaimed, "Now the Minister is beaten, the country may be saved!" He concluded by asking again about St. Kitt's.

Ellis said there were rumours, but he had heard nothing officially. Rigby defended North for remaining in office when in a minority—all sides of the House had been occasionally wrong, and the hon. member himself had voted for the Boston Port Bill. It was unjust to blame Ministers for the loss of Minorca. He believed the people were tired of the American war—and indeed he was perfectly tired of it himself. He was sure the people were tired—for being in the country last week, he heard bells ring, and thought it was on account of the majority obtained over the Minister—but on enquiry found it was because there was "peace with America." The people thought Parliament could make peace. He was a great lover of majorities, and he should always own he thought the noble lord in the blue ribbon the best of all his Majesty's Ministers—but if so little faith was to be placed in his word he had better be removed at once. In the course of this speech, Rigby—who had probably dined—remarked, that though tired of the American War, he was by no means tired of receiving cash—adding, "But I can speak my honest opinion, uninfluenced by my place."

Fox rose to explain why he voted for the Port Bill—it was on the Minister's pledging himself that if the tea thrown overboard was paid for, taxation should be dropped. And there were at that time merchants in London who offered to pay. Pitt having said he was surprised to hear Rigby say he was not tired of receiving cash, but the nation was tired of paying cash, Rigby retorted that however lucrative his office might be, it was held "by the fathers of the two last gentlemen,"[2] and he had no doubt they had some eye

[1] The King boasted that Stocks had not fallen upon the news of Yorktown. Gloucester told Walpole it was because people concluded there *must* now be peace.

[2] This gibe, however, must have fallen very harmlessly on William Pitt, whose father renounced the gains made by every Paymaster before him, and paid the public money into the Treasury the moment he received it, so letting the interest accrue to the public. It was by not paying the money into the Treasury that Henry Fox amassed his great fortune—the charge of peculation was unjust. He

to holding it when he had to give it up! Undoubtedly he was not tired of receiving money, but he was not to be told that because men received the emoluments of office they were the authors of our ruin.

Barré told Rigby it was no wonder he was not tired of receiving —it appeared from the paper on the table that for six years of the greatest distress and calamity we had known, he had had no less than £600,000 of the national money in his hands; and at the very moment when the House complained of the enormity of such profits, he had drawn for more, and had kept in hand a balance of near £900,000!

Conway's motion was carried without a division.

The very next day the Attorney-General brought in his Bill to enable his Majesty to make Peace or Truce with America. It was to repeal all Acts relative to commerce with America, from the 12th Charles II to the present time. He explained how, by the Act of Charles II, everything to be consumed in the Colonies must be shipped in England, and nothing produced in the Colonies must be taken elsewhere than to England. This Act must of course be repealed, and many others—down to the Prohibitory Act. When the Commissioners were sent out, they were empowered to *suspend* these Acts, but the Americans would not trust Parliament—it was insinuated that Parliament was not sincere, and might rescind everything done by the Commissioners. The same doubt might exist now—so it was better to repeal. Thus the Attorney-General of England meekly followed North in admitting that nobody trusted the promises of Administration.

Fox said only personal respect for the Attorney-General prevented his bursting out laughing, and then walking out of the House. To hear such a proposal from that side—and from a member who voted against the resolution last Wednesday, was farcical. The learned gentleman had said the best way to incline the Americans to prefer our market was to open our ports to them. What a pity he and his friends did not find this out four years ago! Then we should not have lost America and the West India Islands, and Minorca—and God only knew how long we should keep Jamaica and Gibraltar! Was it probable Ministers meant to make peace? Spain offered mediation, just before she declared war. In 1781 one of the most powerful princes in Europe[1] offered mediation. Would Ministers tell on what grounds it was refused?

did not steal the money entrusted to him—he only used his opportunity of putting it out to interest. Pitt would not do this.

[1] Catherine II.

Those who did not listen to mediation could not be called friends to peace. Was it true that Ministers had flatly refused to allow any agents from America to meet their plenipotentiaries under the mediation of the prince alluded to? Before he sat down, he had a proposal to make to Ministers; he would inform them for certain that there were persons now in Europe who were fully empowered to treat for peace with America; and though Fox believed they would not treat with the present Ministers, he would put them in a way of making peace—if they did not like to undertake it themselves, he would negotiate for them. He saw a learned gentleman smile—he was not surprised—he could not have brought himself to make such a proposal if the good of his country did not urge him to it. Our affairs were so circumstanced that Ministers must lose their places, or the country must be undone; he would therefore let them enjoy those emoluments which they held so dear, provided he could save his country. "*For this end he was willing to serve them in the business of peace, in any capacity, even as an under commis or messenger.*" But this did not mean that he would have any connection with them; "*from the moment when he should make any terms with one of them, he would rest satisfied to be called the most infamous of mankind; he could not for an instant think of a coalition with men, who in every public and private transaction, as ministers, had shewn themselves void of every principle of honour and honesty; in the hands of such men he would not trust his honour, even for a minute.*"

North flatly denied that Ministers were not inclined for peace—at least so far as related to himself. He always was a friend to peace—there were men in the House who knew it. He declined Fox's services—he would never employ a person who publicly declared he could not put confidence in himself. That hon. gentleman seemed in a great hurry to get the places of Ministers—at least he was in a great hurry to drive them from their places, though he could not learn that among those who wished to succeed there was any settled system. So it was for the good of the public that he himself should stay in, and continue to prevent confusion in the State, "and the introduction of principles that might not be constitutional." With this view he was determined not to go out of office till he received his royal master's commands, or till the sense of that House, expressed in the clearest manner, pointed out the propriety of withdrawing. As for the emoluments of office—were they forty times greater than they were, they could not compensate for the anxieties and vexations, and the uncandid treatment he met with in that

House.[1] Fox said when he called the noble lord dishonourable, he meant in transactions of a half-private, half-public nature—not in his private character, nor in his public character as regarded money-matters—in which he admitted he stood clear from imputation. And so, with another half-jesting speech from North, the motion passed without a division.

The last days of North's Ministry were one continual scene of humiliation. On the 6th, Burke baited him on the Taxes. North said he was not ready with them—hurry of business, late hours of the House (and he might have added, attendance on the King)—he trusted their candour would excuse him. But Burke had no mercy. The loan had been voted above a week, and the taxes that were to pay the interest on it ought to be ready. He had looked over the list—he found we were loaded with ten new taxes—beer, wine, soap, leather, houses, coaches, post-chaises, post-horses, stamps and servants. (A friend here hinted he had forgotten sugar, on which he said, he had—but now St. Kitt's[2] was lost, and in all human probability Barbadoes and Jamaica would soon follow, we should soon have no sugar to tax.) He did not wonder the noble lord was at a loss for new taxes—what fresh burden could he add? We were taxed if we rode, if we walked; if we stayed at home, if we went abroad; if we were masters, or if we were servants; if we drank wine, or if we drank beer. Let us see how the account stood—the first thing is, debtor by loss, a hundred millions. Now let us look at the creditor side. We have bought a hundred millions' worth of national disasters. The whole in one view appears thus—Debtor by loss: one hundred millions of money. Creditor by loss: one hundred thousand men, and the loss of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania—he ran over all the colonies—St. Vincent, Grenada, Dominica, Tobago, St. Christopher's, Senegal, Pensacola and Minorca—which at a moderate computation produced this country annually £4,550,000. Well may the noble lord talk of gratitude to his Sovereign—for keeping him after he has lost so many valuable possessions! And did he mean to raise only the sum necessary for the interest of the new loan, or would he raise £1,300,000 to pay both the interest and the deficiency of other taxes?

North said he only meant to raise £800,000 for the interest. "Mr. Fox, on this, attacked his lordship with uncommon force."

[1] North had received the Garter, the sinecure of the Cinque Ports, a patent place for his son, Bushy Park for his wife, and some said a grant of part of the Savoy—all in addition to the pension of £4000 a year.

[2] St. Christopher's surrendered on the 12th of February.

The noble lord had at last confessed himself exhausted in finance —no longer able to raise taxes to pay the debt caused by his cursed American War. His whole administration had been one continued scene of blunders! His confession proved him an ignorant and bad financier, totally unacquainted with the resources of the country. He went on year after year making taxes which were insufficient for the purpose intended—then he made taxes to cover the deficiencies. He borrowed an enormous sum, and did not know how to pay even the interest. A few evenings ago he told us not to say we wanted peace—it would prevent our getting good terms. And now he declares to all the world that he cannot raise more taxes!

The distracted Minister was not ready with his taxes, so Lord John Cavendish's Resolutions came on first. On the 8th of March he moved four Resolutions of Censure on his Majesty's Ministers.

He said the great and splendid empire of Britain was nearly overturned—disaster and disgrace were pouring in upon us from every quarter. When he looked round for the causes of our calamities, the first thing that struck him was the profusion with which supplies had been voted. Under the three heads of Navy, Army, and Ordnance, £100,000,000 had been voted. The taxes rendered necessary by the war already exceeded £3,000,000 a year. "In the last glorious war," we were led from victory to victory, from conquest to conquest, and the taxes laid during the war were no more than £2,500,000. We have spent infinitely more money to purchase loss and disgrace. Who could imagine, from the sums voted for the Navy, that we should be everywhere inferior to the enemy? Some might think we had not yet suffered much from the Dutch war—let them look into the ordnance estimates for the present year! For the defence of our coast—to protect it from the Dutch—we have erected a chain of fortifications along the coast to the north of Scotland. We erected no such fortifications in the last war. Why was our Navy gone? Was it the fault of Parliament? Besides the immense sums voted during the war, 25 millions were voted during the peace. His Resolutions were: That the money voted since 1775, for the Army, Navy, and Ordnance, exceeds the sum of £100,000,000.

That during this period, we have lost the thirteen colonies of America (except the posts of New York, Charlestown, and Savannah); the newly-acquired colony of Florida, and many of our West India Islands, and those that remain are in imminent danger.

That Great Britain is engaged in an expensive war with America, France, Spain, and Holland, without a single ally.

That the chief cause of all these misfortunes, has been the want of foresight and ability in his Majesty's Ministers.

Powis seconded, and Martin made a vigorous speech, in the course of which he read to the House what Junius had written twelve years ago about North. Jenkinson asked the House not to vote the Resolutions—not because they would tell the enemy anything they did not know, but because it looked as though we were sick of the war, and ready to purchase peace on any terms. This would be dangerous. The war with America was undoubtedly unsuccessful, but it was not therefore less just. It was undertaken to defend the rights of Parliament. If we were obliged to relinquish our object, we were exactly in the situation of the most powerful and wisest nations in their turn. The House of Austria and the House of Bourbon had each been exhausted and almost ruined. It was true that at the end of the last war our power was carried to the most unexpected height—that was why we had no allies now. Great power excites envy; envy produces enemies. Austria and Bourbon were too formidable for their neighbours, and their neighbours combined to ruin them. He did not deny the truth of the resolution before the House, but he thought it highly inexpedient to agree to it. So he moved the order of the day. Ellis rejoiced at a motion which gave the House an opportunity of saying whether their confidence in Ministers was extinct or not. The world will see now whether we really have lost the confidence of Parliament. An hon. gentleman thought it a bad omen that he had not recanted any error—he did not see that he had been in any error. He voted for the American war upon principle, but no man wished more ardently for peace. But he had not changed his principles—his principles were still the same—he only thought now that they ought not to be enforced. He was an enemy to the resolution—because, though it could do no good whatever, it might do much mischief. The world would think we were in despair. Suppose Congress were to tell the world that their resources were exhausted, and their paper-money not worth a farthing? Our plans had miscarried, but would gentlemen say positively it was the fault of Ministers? Might it not be the fault of those who carried them into execution? He really did not mean to accuse anyone—he only wanted to show the injustice of blaming Ministers. Perhaps neither those who planned, nor those who carried out, were to blame — perhaps the wisdom of Providence had decreed we

should be unsuccessful! As for himself, he had been so short a time a Minister, that the hon. gentleman could not say *he* had done anything yet to deserve censure. All *he* had done was to appoint Sir Guy Carleton to the chief command in America. He adjured gentlemen on his own side of the House, "as men of honour and Christians," to support the resolution, if in their conscience they had, like gentlemen on the other side, really lost all confidence in the present Ministry.

Burke, "in one of the best adapted pieces of satire we almost ever remember to have heard him make," said not one man of real independent property in that House defended the present system—no man attempted to defend Ministers, unless he had a place, or a contract, or some such motive to speak. Ministers defended each other—the Secretary at War defended the American Secretary, and both defended the noble lord in the blue ribbon. Abraham Rawlinson (who, however, voted for the motion) told the House he had heard from the captain of one of his ships that Sir Samuel Hood had relieved St. Christopher's,[1] and taken the whole French fleet and army; he said that Opposition dared not face this news, and therefore had not mentioned St. Kitt's of late. Maitland asked what was the state of a Government which founded its claim to support on the probability of one disaster out of many being retrieved? Adam tried to frighten the House out of placing Opposition in power. One of them has said that a man is infamous who forgets his principles on coming into power. What are their principles? They say that the voice of the people should be collected out of doors—they want annual Parliaments—they want to alter the representation of the people, though for so many years our Constitution has been looked on "as the most perfect that human wisdom could frame."

Fox said he repeated that a man was infamous who abandoned when in office the principles he had held when out of it. The great principles on which he differed from Administration were, the American war, and the influence of the Crown. He quoted the resolutions of the 6th of April, 1780, and those of the 27th February last past. He could show from the list of the divisions that if the place-men and contractors were taken away, instead of a majority of 19 against Ministers, there would have been a majority of over 100. The Septennial Bill was a Bill of modern date—he believed that annual or triennial Parliaments would be an improvement. It had been said that Opposition would form an administration of proscription—this he positively denied. Those with whom

[1] The captain's story was a myth—St. Christopher's had fallen.

he had the honour to act wished to form an Administration on the broadest possible basis—to take in all that was great and dignified in the Empire—every man of influence, of popularity, of knowledge, of experience, without regarding his particular opinion on abstract points—and to employ all this body of strength to the deliverance of the Empire. *He had only said he could form no connection with the present Cabinet*; "that he should be infamous if he did." Even among them, however, there was one he respected—the Lord Chancellor—who had always taken care to convince the world he had no share in their measures.

Dundas talked about Mr. Fox's "other Parliament in Westminster hall," and said our misfortunes came—not from Ministers' want of foresight, but from the American War—and that came from "the irresolute, weak, and contradictory measures" of the Administrations which first passed the Stamp Act, then repealed it, and then passed the Declaratory Act. The American War was in its beginning a popular war. It was now very much disliked, because of the calamities it had drawn upon us. He did not mean any incivility to the gentleman who commanded—but the French broke with us immediately after the surrender of Saratoga!

Once more Fox rose to explain his Broad-bottom Administration—it would proscribe none but the five or six men who had been his Majesty's confidential advisers—it would not even proscribe the Lord Advocate, "though they abhorred his notions of the Constitution"! And as for consulting the people out of doors, this was the first Administration since the Revolution that had dared to deny that right.

Sir Fletcher Norton attacked Rigby. The report of the Commissioners of Accounts showed that for several years past he had in his hands a balance of from £500,000 to £900,000—which "he was very credibly informed the right hon. gentleman had put out to interest," and he wanted to know to whom that interest belonged? Rigby, in answer, "spoke in a style of ridicule for some time," paying ironical compliments to the learned gentleman for his disinterestedness—it was not revenge, but pure patriotism! At last, seeming to remember that this was hardly an answer as to what had become of the interest on £900,000, he said it was not fair to call on him to settle so large a sum all at once—he asked for the indulgence granted to former Paymasters—he deserved it, for he was "the greatest paymaster this country ever knew, larger sums of money having passed through his hands than through any man's before." He defended North,

because "he saw that he was a persecuted man, a man that was falling—if he courted his own safety he should look up to the hon. gentleman" (Fox)—"he was to be the man to whom all men must look for promotion." He enlarged once more on the great sums in his hands—"it was natural that his situation should excite envy." But not a word about the interest, although Norton said, if the Crown did not take up the matter, he would.

Very late in the debate, North spoke—sneering at the "glorious majority of 19," and calling Conway's motion "the most impolitic step Parliament could take." The present motions were, to be sure, rather more moderate than an Address to remove Ministers, but went to the same effect, and if carried, Ministers must go. He quibbled a little, but he neither denied the charges brought against him, nor attempted to justify them. What defence can a Minister make who knows that he has ruined his country with his eyes open? And this was what North had done, and his confession stands written with his own hand, in his letter to the King.

At last, at two in the morning, the question was put. The numbers were 216 to 226. There was a majority of 10 for Administration.[1]

In this debate Pitt made the famous declaration that he could not hope to take any share in a new Administration, and were his doing so more within his reach, *he never would accept of a subordinate situation.*[2]

[1] Ministers, collecting the whole force of placemen and contractors, obtained a majority of 10.—*Court and Cabinets of George III*, i. 24.

[2] "It is said indeed that Pitt had no sooner sat down than he felt he might have gone too far, and consulted Admiral Keppel, who was next him, whether he should not rise again and explain."—Stanhope's *Life of the Rt. Hon. William Pitt*, i. 56.

Keppel replied, "No—parliamentary explanations were best avoided."—ALBEMARLE.

CHAPTER CXIII

THE FALL OF THE NORTH MINISTRY

"I will fight your battle while a rag of you remains, but it is a wild idea to suppose that with a majority of only ten votes the Government of this country in time of war can be carried on. A few changes two months ago would have left us all upon our legs. But Lord Sandwich was a favourite with too many of you, and by that partiality we are reduced to what we are now."—*Dundas to Robinson*, March 9, 1782. (*Abergavenny Papers*, p. 51.)

"The younger Portion of Society scarcely remembered any other Minister than Lord North; and Lord Sandwich had presided nearly as long at the Admiralty. . . . No Man will hesitate in believing that Lord North might probably have continued in Power as long as Sir Robert Walpole had done, if the American War had not intervened and overturned him."—Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs*, iii. 2, 3.

"I must confess, that I do not think it an advisable measure, first to attempt to form a Ministry by arrangement of office—afterwards to decide upon what principles or measures they are to act."—*Lord Rockingham to Lord Chancellor Thurlow*, March 20, 1782.

THE majority of the 8th, such as it was, was helped by a report (untrue) that Sir Samuel Hood had captured 6000 Frenchmen at St. Christopher's.

The same day that the King told his Commons he would take the measures which seemed to *him* the best, he sent for Thurlow, and told him that North must give up. Thurlow, who did not love North, had the satisfaction of telling him this.[1] North's first thought seems to have been that now he could escape the Budget. He asked if he must yet propose the taxes? "Yes," replied Thurlow roughly; "you borrowed the money!"

Thurlow was to sound Rockingham! He had some little idea that the present Lord Chancellor was a more suitable person; but, luckily, others did not think so. Thurlow would have made a terrible head of Administration. He had climbed to where he was by his power of frightening people and roaring at them—the terror of his eyes and eyebrows made the expression

[1] Thurlow did not foresee that in less than a year and a half himself would be the disgraced Minister, and have his dismission notified to him by Lord North!—WALPOLE.

"brow-beating" literally true of him. He brow-beat everybody, enemies and friends, Bar and Bench, "the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, the frequenters of Nando's Coffee House, and the Turk's Head, the members of Brooks', the Privy Council and the Cabinet—the heir to the Crown." He even bullied the "inflexible Pitt, and the mild North." "Exposure caused him no blush, refutation hardened his assertion. His gait was that of an elephant, his voice that of a lion reft of his prey. Only one man he treated with decorum—Fox; on one he fawned—his Sovereign."[1]

The negotiation with Thurlow spread over an entire week—from March 11 to 18.

On the 11th, North explained the new taxes. It was the old story, of how little anybody would feel them and yet how much they would bring in. There was a great deal about small-beer—"called in the language of the excise, *Tenths*." All beer above 6s. and under 11s. the barrel was now to pay the "strong-beer-duty" of 3s. a barrel, 14s.-a-barrel beer to pay the same; and beer above that, 8s. a barrel.[2] Then there was to be another 5s. on tea-licences—so now, if, as is asserted, dealers sell contraband tea, the tax will reach them. We learn from North's speech that, to prevent smuggling, a permit was necessary for sending 6 lbs. of tea at a time, anywhere! North proposed an additional licence of £2 for wholesale dealers, and such as had occasion to send 6 lbs. of tea at a time—to be sure, he added, with one of his dreadful gleams of perception, "they might endeavour to evade this by never sending more than 5 lbs. in one parcel," but to prevent this, every dealer who sells more than one hundredweight of tea in the year is to pay the higher duty. This way he thought he would get £48,750 a year. Next came soap—an article which he admitted caused him very great concern, because it was a necessary of life. Undoubtedly the poor wanted it, "but by no means in great quantities"—the tax would not affect them like one on candles or leather. They resort to other

[1] Albemarle's *Life of Rockingham*.

[2] We learn that beer at 14s. per barrel "was a very rich beer," not drunk by the poor. An indignant commentator in the *Gentleman's Magazine* says, of the 3s. a barrel strong-beer duty, "How cruel a tax is this! that the poor shall not have a drop of small-beer to quench their thirst without a treble tax!" (The duty on "small-beer" had been 1s. 4d.) He also says that the 50s. licence to sell tea, coffee, etc., "is half the fair profit of an cwt. of tea." Of the three farthings a pound extra on soap—which North had explained the poor could not possibly feel—the writer observes: "The tax on soap and candles, as it stood before, was thought so hard upon the poor that they were ready to rise upon its first imposition."

means—use lye from wood-ashes—he understood they mixed a little soap with the lye, but only a very little. He believed a quarter of a pound of soap generally served a small family a whole week. His chief reason for proposing the tax was that soap was getting so cheap—within two years it had fallen 10s. a cwt. This was owing to the fall of tallow and barilla. Anyway, he proposed a tax of 7s. a cwt.—three farthings in the pound. He could not imagine this would make any material difference to the poor—at a quarter of a pound a week, it would be only 9½d. a year, and it would bring us in £104,500 clear!

Then came tobacco. Since the war with America, the best had sold for 3s. a pound, but the chief cause of the rise was the taking of the island of St. Eustatius, which had a considerable quantity of tobacco on it—this stopped importation for a time. Another great cause was the blocking up the Chesapeak, so that we could not get any tobacco from America. But since St. Eustatius was retaken, "the customers had looked out for another shop," and we now received great quantities from Danish ports. We had also "a right to expect a vast quantity" from New York—purchased at the capture of Yorktown—to the amount of 3000 hogsheads, "which would consequently, when they arrived, greatly reduce the price." So he proposed another 4d. per pound.

It thus appears that our successes tended to raise prices, and our disasters to lower them; and that in particular the surrender of Yorktown and the recapture of St. Eustatius were positive benefits to British tobacconists! It is also evident that no sooner did any article become "cheap," than North pounced upon it as a good object of taxation.

There was a "trifling" duty on brandy—all foreign brandies to be on an equal footing—and 25 per cent. more on salt—now to include medicinal salts. (Even our jalap was taxed to pay for the American war.) The Minister who was no longer a Minister then flew at larger game—fire-insurances, places of Public Entertainment, Bills of Exchange—lastly, one which he was afraid would meet with opposition—a tax on the carriage of goods. He went into details. First, the fire-insurances. For "the six old offices in London"[1] (besides the sugar-bakers,

[1] The Sun Fire Office, the Royal Exchange, the London Assurance, the Hand-in-Hand, the Union, and the Westminster. "The Westminster insured for about 9 or 10 millions a year. The Sun for ten times as much—he would call it 90 millions; the Exchange, 25 millions; the Hand-in-Hand, 15; the Union, 10; and the London Assurance, 8."

who had formed a plan of insurance for their common safety) —he would calculate the whole amount insured annually at 150 millions sterling, and he would reckon the tax to produce £100,000 (though it would really be £112,000). The tax on inland bills would produce £50,000 — reckoning the whole number of bills drawn in a year to be four millions. Then places of public entertainment — to be rated agreeably to the prices paid for admission. He thought he could get £20,000 a year out of these places in town,[1] and £10,000 more from those in the country. Lastly, the carriage tax—which he was afraid would meet with opposition—a tax on the carriages of all goods—by weight, which would make it "fall on all, and sit lightly on every one." For land-carriages he had intended to make the tax *ad valorem*, but found this totally impracticable. So he would make it "agreeable to the weight the carriages would bear"; 3d. a mile on waggons with wheels more than nine inches broad; nine inches, 2½d.; six inches, 1¾d.; narrow wheels, 1½d.; carts with nine-inch wheels, 1¼d.; six inches or less, 1d. By enquiring at toll-gates, he had learned that waggons and carts seldom carried less weight than was allowed by Act of Parliament — indeed, they generally carried more (here he gave the exact amount of risk they ran by overloading). The additional duty therefore would not be more than one half-penny and seven-sixteenths of a farthing per ton per mile; from which calculation he inferred that the carter would only charge his customers three farthings more per ton per mile. The waggons, he understood, went about 26 miles per day, so their freight was about 13d. per cwt. per day. And as a broad-wheeled waggon was to carry 4 tons 5 cwt., on a journey of 26 miles the freight would produce £4, 12s. 1d.— therefore the new duty of twopence-halfpenny per ton per mile would produce 5s. 5d., a seventeenth part of the whole freight. Having thus shown that the tax would be almost imperceptible, he went on to assure the Committee that he would exempt hay, straw, corn, coals, fuel, manure, etc., "as these articles he by no means wished to make dearer than they were." (Thus admitting that taxes do make things dearer!) As to the carriage of household furniture and small parcels, he did not suppose they were carried at present as cheaply as 1s. 1d. per cwt.; "but there was such a number of carriages in each town in competition with each other," that he was sure they would keep

[1] Drury Lane, Covent Garden, the Haymarket, the Opera House, Sadler's Wells, Ranelagh, and Vauxhall. All these were "generally crowded."

the prices down. He had tried to collect the number of carriages to and from London—500 broad-wheel waggons, 100 narrow; 100 three-inch. Also 50 nine-inch-wheel carts; 50 six-inch, and 50 three-inch. From all which facts he inferred that the tax would bring in somewhat over £60,000.

Then came carriage by water. But as rivers "turn and wind," the tax would be only a farthing per ton per mile—this would only be 1d. per ton in 80 miles. It would chiefly affect flour—he went into a long calculation to show that the carriage-tax on a ton of flour from Reading to London by water would be only 20d., and of "the faggots to bake that flour into bread," 5d.—2s. 1d. in all. And a ton of flour made into bread will feed 2500 men for one day—while the tax on its carriage will produce £210,000 a year to the revenue—with 3d. a ton on the coasting-trade.[1]

Finally, he explained that he had thought of a small stamp-duty on receipts and discharges, "but it had given such general offence that he had withdrawn it"—though he could not see the objection. He thought it would have produced alone £800,000—he merely mentioned it for the Committee and the world to know that they had such a resource. And he begged the Committee to give him credit for industry, if they could not for genius. And as an honourable gentleman had asked about deficiencies—as though he was afraid he might go out of office, and leave burdens upon his successor, he would say that the deficiency did not amount to £500,000.

Fox said it did not matter whether the deficiency was two or five hundred thousand—nor need the noble lord think that he wanted his place. "He wished only that his country might be saved." He complained that North had for years not provided taxes sufficient to pay the interest of the loans. So he had taken the Sinking Fund, which was meant to be only the security for the interest, and had made it pay the interest. This day he had only asked for £800,000, when he ought to have asked for a million. Fox called the tax on carriage "a tax on the means of taxing." He reproved the levity with which North had referred to the vote of the 27th—he begged him to remember that his jests had cost the country dear enough. It was high time there should be some government—at present there was none at all. He had promised to go out

[1] This was only the revenue from water-carriage. That from land-carriage was estimated at over £60,000 more. North's calculations are valuable for the light they throw on internal communication in England in 1782.

—let him keep his promise. "There must be a scuffle, and the sooner that scuffle was over the better." He did not mean to "goad him, or run him down"—he meant not to offend him —but he must continue to urge him to retire, and the sooner he did it, with the more dignity could he do it, and the less disgrace. Then he informed the Committee that on Friday next a motion of the utmost importance would come before the House.

The Earl of Surrey said that iron ought to have been exempted — the towns of Birmingham, Sheffield, and Wolverhampton consumed amazing quantities of iron, and the trade would be stopped if the additional duty took place.

So North presented his last Budget.

On the 10th, North had told the King he was resolved to go. If he must propose the taxes, this should be his last act as Minister. The King's only hope now was to divide Opposition. Dundas, who had done more than any man to get Germaine out, was talking of "a coalition of parties," and proposing to search for someone under whom all parties would be willing to unite. He had hoped to be himself the go-between.

On the 11th of March the Lords adjourned. Thurlow asked Rockingham to remain, and the two sat down again in the empty House, while Thurlow beat about the bush, until Rockingham asked him, if he had a message from the King, to say so. Thurlow replied that he had. It was this—Would Lord Rockingham consent to form an Administration *on a broad bottom*? They talked for an hour and a half, and had a second interview next day — Rockingham insisting on a definite understanding, the Chancellor trying to persuade him to come in and trust the King. But Rockingham refused to be cajoled. His terms were high— American Independence; No veto; the Establishment Bill; great part of the Contractors' Bill; Economy; a General Peace, if possible. And there were some persons essential to the public service—would his Majesty consent to receive them?

The King seemed to agree that there must be peace, but he would not concede Independence. And by a *broad bottom* he meant the inclusion of some of his old Ministers. So, after lasting a week, the negotiation fell through, though on the 13th a rumour went round the town that North had actually resigned. The King still clung to the hope of tricking Rockingham into accepting first and settling terms afterwards. If he came in under such conditions, the King would take care he should be helpless—if he finally drew back, he would be discredited by his momentary

consent. Meanwhile the King was writing ungratefully to his miserable slave: "If you resign before I have arranged what to do, you will for ever forfeit my regard."[1]

The last assault was made on the 15th of March. That day Sir John Rous[2] made his motion for withdrawing the Confidence of Parliament from his Majesty's Ministers. Rous said no one could suppose he was actuated by a spirit of party. He was "descended from a Tory family, and had been bred up in Tory principles." From the first dawn of the American war he had felt the injustice and impolicy of it—he came into that House its declared enemy on principle. But he also came highly prepossessed in favour of the noble lord in the blue ribbon—he felt such respect for his character that he would have gone great lengths to support him. But he found the noble lord blindly pursued measures which had reduced the country from glory and prosperity to calamity and disgrace. An hon. Secretary of State (Ellis) asked the other night where we could find better Ministers? The question was an insult to the understanding of the House; everyone knew the consequences that had attended their administration. He asked if a single independent member could lay his hand on his heart and say, he did not believe the noble lord in the blue ribbon was the author of this calamity of the American war?

Lord George Henry Cavendish seconded the motion which ended the North Ministry.

Sir Richard Symons was the first who defended Ministers. He said he could lay his hand on his heart and say he believed the war was not to be imputed to the noble lord, but to the extraordinary and unjustifiable opposition given to the measures of Government. George Onslow said the American war was the source of all our misfortunes—but who caused the war? He

[1] At this infinitely critical juncture, Jenkinson slipped the word "Ireland" into a Mutiny Bill for the Navy. "Had the bill passed, Ireland would have been in a flame. The Court had had secret intelligence that the volunteers were already negotiating with France." Lord Beauchamp represented the danger to his father and his uncle (Lord Hertford and General Conway), who remonstrated with Hillsborough. Hillsborough said he was sorry, but all the Cabinet had agreed to the insertion. Beauchamp then appealed to Jenkinson, who "flew into a passion, and said, *all was lost if everything was yielded.*" At last North was appealed to, "who, though rarely the inventor of noxious measures, consented to be the instrument." The word Ireland was omitted.—Walpole, *Last Journals*, ii. 518.

[2] Ex-Chairman of the East India Company, and long a ministerialist, and especially friendly to North.

would prove it was not the noble lord. It was the Stamp Act—he thanked God he never voted for it! The Americans would have plunged us into a war if it had not been repealed; but what followed? A Declaratory Act, which gave as much offence as the Stamp Act. "The nation at large upheld the idea of sovereignty over America; all that was great in England sanctified the idea with their suffrage and authority—nay, even the great Lord Chatham himself declared in full Parliament, that if America should manufacture a stocking, or forge a hobnail, he would make her feel the whole weight of the power of this country. The principle of the war, therefore, had been upheld by Mr. Grenville in his Stamp Act, by the Marquess of Rockingham in his repeal of it, by the great Earl of Chatham himself, in his speech on the Declaratory Act." One great cause of our failure was the countenance given in that House to the American rebellion—the cause of the rebels was called the cause of liberty; praises were lavished on Dr. Franklin and Mr. Laurens—members said they would rather live with them in prison than be with those who were loyally supporting the cause of England. They pointed out the weakest parts of our government—he did not believe they stopped there—on his conscience he believed they sent information to the Court of Versailles—(Name! name! by whom?). Onslow said he could not tell—or if he could he would not. All he would say was, *he* had not been in Paris since the war began.[1]

Adam repeated his former speeches—hinting that officers, not Ministers, were to blame—that other Ministers had made expensive wars—that misfortune did not prove want of ability. The cause of our success in the Seven Years' War was that at the very outset, and "before the French expected hostilities," we seized the French merchantmen, "and deprived the navy of France of such a number of seamen by that stroke, that during the whole war it was not able to recover it."[2] If the present Ministers had done the same they would very likely have been as successful as their predecessors.

The debate became exceedingly angry—chiefly on the question of who was an "independent" member and who was not—Adam being particularly fervent in asserting his own "independence,"—though he did "hold a place under Government." And some of the ministerialists began to hint at a coalition. As usual, North spoke late, and then "with considerable emotion, and

[1] This was a hit at Fox and others, who had visited Paris.

[2] Long lists of them are given in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1755 and 1756. War was not declared till May 17, 1756.

under great embarrassment."[1] He had been accused of jesting —of being fond of turning things into ridicule. He was not inclined to jest with serious things, but he could not consider the arguments used against him as serious. Presumption and violence were no part of his character. He had the best reason in the world for not fearing what was to follow, or being "filled with contrition for what was past"—namely "the consciousness of having done no wrong." If he had ever held out hopes to the Americans that they had friends in this country, who furthered their interests in preference to those of Great Britain, he should feel deep contrition and repentance—self-abasement, humiliation —shame! He was accused of deluding that House and the people with accounts of the pacific intentions of our neighbouring enemies —if he had been deceived, it was an error of judgment only, not of the heart. He had been taxed as the author of the American war, and the conductor of it upon principles inimical to the interests and Constitution of the country. As to the principle and the continuance of the war, he would say what he had always said, that it was a truly English principle, and that as an Englishman he had a right to maintain it, for the purpose of supremacy, if not of revenue. He liked this motion better than the one last week—it was laid without anger, in moderate terms. It could not be denied the Army, Navy, and Ordnance had cost an immense sum, but that was no proof that the House ought to take away its confidence. As to the allegation that America and the West India Islands were lost, and that it was the fault of Ministers, he denied it. The Stamp Act was repealed, and the Declaratory Act passed, before he was a Minister—he voted for them both, but only as a private member. He would ever contend that the American war was just and necessary. It was not he who said we had many friends in America—it was another Minister—not but he believed it. We still had numerous friends, but he had never thought we had enough to warrant our going to war on their account.

When he came to speak of going out, his tone was very singular. He hinted that he would agree to a coalition—for years he had been ready for one. He declared to God that no love of office or emolument kept him in—"but there were certain circumstances in the way of his going out just at that moment, which he could not further explain." A time would soon come, he flattered himself, when he could amply explain, and satisfy gentlemen of every party that he had done his duty. He only asked for

[1] Selwyn says, however, "Lord North was thought to speak better, and with more spirit, than before."—*To Lord Carlisle*, March 16, 1782.

proof of "neglect or guilt," before the House voted a censure on Ministers.

And now every ministerial speaker echoed the word "coalition." Let the present Ministry remain, said Dundas, "and frame the coalition." Would you save a ship in a storm by throwing the crew overboard? Pitt said the Administration of the noble lord had been an Administration of influence and intrigue—he hoped the House would not "contaminate their own purpose" by letting the present Ministers choose their successors.

Again it was two in the morning before the House divided. This time Ministers had a majority of only nine (236 to 227). Nearly 480 members are said to have been present. Fox gavè notice that another motion to the same effect would be proposed next Wednesday.[1]

Never since the beginning of the session had the House been so full as on Wednesday the 20th of March. Four hundred and eighty members were present. There were also "crowds of spectators." There was a strong rumour that North had resigned, and Opposition was determined that his removal should be the act of the House of Commons, and not his own or the King's. Lord Surrey was to move the dismissal of Ministers.

At a quarter past four the Speaker called to gentlemen to take their places. North had not arrived—he had been to the levée. Presently he came, in his levée dress.[2] Surrey rose—but at the same moment North rose too. They stood facing each other—neither would give way. There was a general clamour and confusion—one side calling for Surrey, the other for North. At last Mr. Baker's voice was heard calling to order, and as soon as silence was obtained, he said it was indecent in the noble lord in the blue ribbon to rise when he knew the noble earl had a motion of the greatest importance to submit to the House. North said it was not disrespect, but only to save the House the trouble of discussing a question

[1] "If we go out of office I should hope that I shall not be forgotten. Unless I retire with a pension, my finances will be in the utmost disorder."—*Sandwich to Robinson*, March 15, 1782. (*Abergavenny Papers*, p. 52.)

On March 15, Sandwich wrote to Robinson that "if Lord North did not despond and talk of giving the thing up, matters would not be yet irretrievable." "I perceive the rats increase."—*Sandwich to Robinson*. On March 19, even Rigby "desponds totally, and thinks that further resistance is vain."—*Abergavenny Papers*.

[2] That afternoon the King had acknowledged to North that in the present temper of the Commons he thought the Administration was at an end. "Then, Sir," said North, "had I not better state the fact at once?" "Well, you may do so."

that was become totally unnecessary. Here Baker called him to order again—he had no right to know what the motion was, and therefore it was highly unparliamentary to say it was unnecessary. North insisted that it was not disorderly to say he knew the substance of the motion—it was publicly announced to the House some days ago, by an hon. member, that a motion would be made to-day similar to that rejected last Friday. He thought it not necessary, because the object of the motion was to remove his Majesty's Ministers, and he could take upon himself to say *that his Majesty's Ministers were no more*—so the object is already attained.

"The House seemed for some moments thunder-struck."[1] Opposition "doubted his lordship's sincerity," and suspected "some ministerial finesse." There was a "clamour," owing to "an infinite number of members of both sides" rising to speak at once—Opposition crying, "Lord Surrey! Lord Surrey! No Adjournment! No Adjournment!"

At last William Pitt obtained a hearing, after North had said he did not move an adjournment. Pitt said the noble lord in the blue ribbon ought to have waited till the other noble lord had made his motion. Then Fox moved, "That the Earl of Surrey do now speak"—this was the more necessary as the House could not place any confidence in the word of Ministers, and therefore ought not to believe upon that word that the King's Ministers were no more—the House ought to take care, and had it in its power to take care, that the Ministers should be no more. He therefore moved, "That the Earl of Surrey do now speak."

This motion being read from the Chair, North rose, and said he had now a right to speak to the question. He was surprised at the heat the House had shown—did they not remember that notice was given of a motion essentially the same as that of Friday last—and Friday week? Did anyone not know it was a motion to remove his Majesty's Ministers? It was strange that telling them the business was already done should give rise to such heat and disorder. The House would remember the debates of the last three weeks—again and again it had been declared that the country was in a state of distraction and confusion, and that he was the obstacle to good government and good order being restored. He had come down that day to assure them he was no longer the obstacle described. He would not mention names, but he could with authority assure the House *that his Majesty had come to a full determination to change his Ministers.* He had only wished to prevent an unnecessary discussion. He could pledge himself to

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine.*

the House that his Majesty's Ministry was at an end. He thanked the House for the very kind, the repeated, and the essential support he had for so many years received from the Commons of England, while he held a situation "to which he must confess he had been at all times unequal." It was the more incumbent on him to return thanks, because that House had made him what he was—in consequence of the part he had taken in that House he became recommended to his Sovereign. Then, with more expressions of humility, he returned to begging the House not to have the motion debated. He knew he was responsible—he pledged himself not to run away—he would always be to be found! He moved the adjournment—for a day—and to-morrow he would propose a further adjournment for a few days.

Opposition was terribly afraid that a stratagem lurked beneath adjournment. As Pitt said, they wanted to know to what extent North pledged himself, and that his declaration was not merely a plea for getting rid of the motion, "that they might be put out of the possession of their majority." So North rose again. He could not speak more explicitly—it was not proper. But he assured them that the persons who had for some time conducted public affairs were no longer his Majesty's Ministers—they only remained till others were appointed. The sooner those others were appointed the better. Some most extraordinary things were said. Rigby promised to join in a vote of censure, if it turned out that there was the smallest deceit in what had passed that day. He thought North justified in retiring—he advised him to retire. A majority of 9 was nothing—there was no standing against so respectable a minority as 227 men of great abilities and high character. Such a minority was a hint too broad to be trifled with. Baker was still suspicious. He "called to mind the noble lord's usual faithlessness to Parliament." One sentence in particular made him uneasy. The noble lord had said, "his Majesty's Ministry, *constituted as it then was*," would be removed. What did that mean? Was the noble lord only—or perhaps one more Minister—to go?

Burke's speech that day was a solemn warning to the side which had triumphed. Let them ask themselves whether they could act in power as firmly as they had acted out of power—if not, let them not accept of power. This is the time when ambitious views, that have lain secretly in a corner of men's hearts, are unlocked—when all their desires, their self-opinions, their vanity, their avarice, their lust of power, and all the worst passions of the human mind, are set at large, and begin to show themselves. At such a time let men take care what they did, how far they went, what limits they pre-

scribed themselves. A great deal of most astonishing eloquence had been heard within those walls, and men of the first and rarest talents had exerted themselves to bring about what the noble lord in the blue ribbon had that day declared was near at hand. But neither abilities nor eloquence had done as much as the spirit of the people, and the conduct of the independent members who best spoke that spirit. For a long while "a fatal torpor" gave strength to the enemy—the weak were seduced to join them, the wicked were confirmed. While you were criminally negligent, they were safe. When you joined together with one voice and mind, they sank instantly. But the end is not achieved by the removal of Ministers. The most essential part remains to be done. "There is a certain fatality attending human nature, which very often defeats the best purposes"—the greatest virtues are generally accompanied by very great defects—independence and public spirit are attended by indolence and supineness. No Administration can exist long without support.

To this point, every word Burke had said was worthy to be adopted by every politician as his rule of public conduct; it was in his highest and noblest vein. But his next words were as unworthy of his best self, as much of his future conduct was unworthy of his past. Not content with saying that no Government can stand unsupported, he went on to speak as though the lack of proper support almost justified a Government in resorting to any means to maintain itself, and the history of the Coalition gives a sinister effect to his words. He said that Ministers, abandoned by the independent interest, had hitherto resorted to the "detestable means" of corruption; but in that they were not so much to blame as the independent gentlemen who suffered them to do it. "Government could only exist in two ways, by its purity, wisdom, and success," which secured to it the love and support of the virtuous; or by the means of corruption; "*and, as government must be supported, the independent men ought to take to themselves blame if they forced a virtuous government to resort to corruption.*"

Conway rose to protest against the statement that Ministers were obliged to resort to corruption—he hoped he had misunderstood, for the hon. member was one for whom he had an esteem perhaps superior to any that he felt for any man—he would most likely be one of those Ministers to whom the country looked for salvation. For his part, he did not think it justifiable to resort to corruption, even for the good of the State—"if Ministers could not carry their measures by honest means, it was their duty to resign." All our hopes depended on a system of incorruptibility. He would rather see the infamous system now abolished renewed with the

same Ministers, than a more insidious, because a more plausible, Government set up, under the sanction of more elevated names, on the same principle. "No; if we must have a government of corruption, let us have governors who are suspected, that we may be on our guard."

Burke disclaimed any such meaning—he flattered himself that his whole conduct showed he reprobated corruption—he only meant to say that Ministers not finding sufficient independent support resorted to it—but he too thought a Minister ought rather to resign. Nor was he himself so foolish as to think that his rank, fortune, or ambition gave him any pretensions to become a Minister. Conway accepted the explanation; but a discordant note had been struck, and the event gives it a sinister significance. For though Burke never stooped to corrupt or to be corrupted, he did stoop to other unworthy means to compass political ends.

The day had been remarkably cold, with a fall of snow. It was a tremendous night, stormy and sleeting. As no one expected so short a sitting, all the carriages had been sent home. When the end came, "Mrs. Bennet's room at the door was crowded." Only North's carriage was waiting. He put one or two of his friends into it, and, turning to the crowd of members, said pleasantly, "I protest, gentlemen, this is the first time I ever derived advantage from being *in the secret.* Good-night."

CHAPTER CXIV

THE NEW CABINET

"I am glad the Ministry is removed. Such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country. If they sent a messenger into the City to take up a printer, the messenger was taken up instead of the printer and committed by the sitting alderman. If they sent one army to the relief of another, the first army was defeated and taken before the other arrived."—DR. JOHNSON.

"It would amuse you to see how most of the pensioned newspapers have changed their style; they now pay assiduous court with compliments and panegyrics to the men whom a few weeks ago they constantly persecuted with libels and lampoons. We hear of nothing but the public savings they are to make, of the peace we are to have with America, and of the peace with Holland." —*Sir Samuel Romilly to the Rev. John Roget*, April 12, 1782.

"Were I ambitious of any other patron than the public, I would inscribe this work to a statesman who, in a long, stormy, and at length an unfortunate Administration, had many political opponents, almost without a personal enemy; who has retained in his fall from power many faithful and disinterested friends; and who under the pressure of severe infirmity enjoys the lively vigour of his mind and the felicity of his incomparable temper. Lord North will permit me to express the feelings of friendship in the language of truth; but even truth and friendship should be silent if he still dispensed the favours of the Crown."—Gibbon's Preface to the Fourth Volume of the *Decline and Fall.*

A NEW expedient had occurred to the King—there was Shelburne. Shelburne did not wish for a "King of Mahrattas." Anybody rather than Rockingham! So the day after North told the House that Ministers were no more, the King sent for Shelburne[1] to Buckingham House, and proposed to him to form an Administration with the Chancellor, Gower, Weymouth, Camden, Grafton, and Rockingham—if they agreed to a "broad-bottom" Administration. Shelburne thought it impracticable. The King spoke of the "cruel usage of all the Powers," of his health, his agitation of mind—all this would make him ill. Also of his determination to risk everything rather than "do an act of meanness"; of his bad opinion of Rockingham's understanding, his horror of Fox, his

[1] Shelburne was at dinner with friends when the King's messenger came. He told them nothing—this was afterwards blamed as duplicity.

preference for Shelburne above all the rest of Opposition—a very moderate compliment, as he did not conceal that he only took Shelburne as the least abhorrent of them.

On the 22nd or 23rd the King sent for Gower[1]—but he too declined to help. On the evening of the 23rd Thurlow came to tell Shelburne that the King "was invincible" about sending for Rockingham. He might bring himself to send for several of the leaders of Opposition—and Rockingham *might* be among them; but the utmost he could bring himself to do was to receive Rockingham through Shelburne.[2]

On Sunday morning (March 24th) the King sent for Shelburne again, and authorised him to offer the Treasury to Rockingham—Shelburne to be Secretary of State. Shelburne was, in fact, to form the Cabinet of which Rockingham was to be the head, and Rockingham was to come in first, and frame a policy afterwards. But Rockingham insisted on a clear understanding. In particular, he must be told plainly that the King placed no veto on American Independence. Most reluctantly the King yielded. Rockingham accepted almost as reluctantly. His first inpulse was to decline, as the King would not see him. Nothing but the knowledge that it was the only chance of peace induced Rockingham to consent. On the Monday, Shelburne came to tell Fox that Lord Rockingham's proposals were substantially agreed to. Fox replied that he saw the new Administration would consist of two parts—one belonging to the King, the other to the public. This was intended for Shelburne. The new Cabinet was split before it was formed.

At last, on the 27th, Rockingham had an audience of the King.

The new Ministry was thus composed—

Marquis of Rockingham, First Lord of the Treasury.

Earl of Shelburne and the Hon. Charles James Fox, Principal Secretaries of State. (The Third Secretaryship abolished.)

Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Admiral Keppel (created a Viscount), First Lord of the Admiralty.

Duke of Grafton, Lord Privy Seal.

Lord Camden, President of the Council.

[1] Since the death of the old Duke, Gower was the leader of the Bedfords—the young Duke was a boy.

[2] Shelburne said to Rockingham, "You can stand without me; I could not without you."

Duke of Richmond, Master-General of the Ordnance.

Lord Thurlow, to continue Chancellor.

General Conway, Commander-in-Chief of the Forces.

John Dunning, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and created Baron Ashburton.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Thomas Orde, Under Secretaries of State.

Thomas Townshend was Secretary at War; Barré, Treasurer of the Navy; Burke, Paymaster-General of the Forces; Lord Howe (created a Viscount), to command "the Grand Fleet"; the Duke of Portland was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and Burgoyne Commander-in Chief in Ireland.

No one has ever been found to say a good word for the North Administration. Romilly said of it, "Their principal characteristics are want of system and resolution . . . perplexed and confused with the mazes and dangers into which they have run, like children they rather turn away from what affrights them . . . ward off the present evil, but leave to-morrow to care for itself . . . they are now confident of success, now plunged into despair." Johnson, their pensioner, said unkindly: "I am glad the Ministry is removed. Such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country."[1] Only the cynical Gibbon spoke gently of North—"he has not a personal enemy, and keeps his friends in his fall."

The North Administration was not a collection of monsters. Some of its members had ability—probably only three—Sandwich, Jenkinson, and Germaine, deserve to be called bad. North was a man of a broad and clear intellect, naturally averse to violence, and quite devoid of rancour. But they had sold themselves to do the will of a King—himself naturally good rather than bad, but whose whole nature was distorted by his belief in the divine right of Kings to rule, and the divine duty of peoples to obey without question. His very virtues became an additional misfortune to his country, because they have thrown a veil over the crimes of his statecraft; and his Ministers prostituted their common-sense and foresight to their Sovereign's obstinate folly.

There was a curious transformation scene in the House. In those times it was the custom for ministerialists to attend the House in full-dress. For many years Opposition had come in "buff and blue uniforms"—supposed to represent the Continental army. Now all was changed. North and his friends appeared wrapped

[1] "The Ministry is dissolved. I prayed with Francis and gave thanks."—Johnson's *Diary*, March 20, 1782.

in greatcoats, or dressed in plain "frocks and boots." Ellis was seen for the first time in his life in undress, while Opposition, installed on the Treasury Bench, "emerged from their obscure lodgings or from Brooks', with appendages of full dress," or returned from Court with swords, lace, and powder. It happened that Nugent's house had lately been robbed, and he had lost a number of pairs of ruffles. A friend asked if he had recovered any of them. "I can't say I have," replied Nugent; "but I shrewdly suspect that I have seen some of them on the hands of the gentlemen who now occupy the Treasury Bench." Fox and Burke being there in their Court-dresses, everybody laughed.

The situation with which the new Cabinet had to cope was one of the extremest gravity. The country was crushed under the weight of taxes piled up to pay the exorbitant interest of the loans, called for year after year by the ever-increasing costs of the American war and all the other wars which had grown out of it. We were now at war with three formidable European Powers, and with thirteen American States. All we could be said to hold, south of Canada, were the three posts of New York, Charlestown, and Savannah—and all three were asserted by the officers who held them to be in imminent danger if not immediately reinforced. Spain had taken from us West Florida, the Bahamas, Minorca, the Isle of Providence. France had taken Granada, the Grenadines, St. Vincent, Dominica, St. Christopher, Nevis, Montserrat, and Minorca. Against this, all we had gained were Sta. Lucia, the French settlements in Senegal, the Island of Goree on the coast of Africa; and in the East Indies, Chandernagore, and the French establishments on the coasts of Bengal and Orissa; Pondicherry, Karical, Mahé, and the "Comptoir of Surat." From the Dutch we had taken Trincomalee and Megapatan in the East Indies; but all we had taken in the West was already lost again, including our unlucky conquest of St. Eustatius, retaken at the end of 1781 in such ignominious circumstances. Two veteran armies, well equipped, and commanded by officers who had served with credit in great European wars, had surrendered to the rebellious "tailors and cobblers" of America. Our East India possessions were threatened by Hyder Ali on land, and by Admiral de Suffrein at sea. Gibraltar had been invested by sea and land for nearly three years, and only held out by being periodically relieved at the risk of losing a fleet each time. The Northern Powers, with Catherine II at their head, had entered into what was called an Armed Neutrality,—but was in reality an Armed Confederacy against Britain's Dominion of the Seas. We had not a friend nor

an ally in all Europe except little Portugal, who could but just maintain her own independence against Spain, and was too weak to resent—much less to prevent—a French squadron from attacking a British convoy in a Portuguese harbour. We had offended the old King of Prussia, and had not pleased the young Emperor of Austria; and both these powerful monarchs refused to allow any more British recruiting in their dominions. We were even more exhausted as to men than as to money. Our ships were worse built and fewer in number than those of our enemies, and the greatest British Admiral of the day reckoned his best ships to be those he had captured from the Spaniards.[1]

Each summer our coasts were alarmed by the sight of the great fleets of France and Spain, coming up Channel with spreading sails, while our boldest Admirals dared not provoke them to battle—and were thanked for their prudence. Recruiting at home had long been insufficient to supply our losses in America; and an intolerable and unconstitutional extension of the Admiralty's right of pressing was not making up for the shortage of seamen—as had been foretold, one of the most alarming consequences of our insensate quarrel with our Colonies. More terrible than all, we had a Sovereign incapable of learning wisdom by experience, whose whole statecraft consisted in refusing to change his mind or his plan, and who provided for the frightful dangers he had created by bribing the House of Commons higher and higher as his situation grew more and more desperate.

But at last there had come a disaster which frightened even those who were battening on his bribes. Yorktown shook the edifice of corruption to its foundations. As an earthquake-shock cracks the walls it does not instantly overthrow, so the catastrophe of Yorktown left the Ministry tottering. North, who had so long foreseen the danger, was panic-stricken; nothing could keep him at his post—he was resolved some other hand than his should undertake the dreadful task of settling the account. He could no longer be retained even by the King's threats to throw up the business of ruling England, and to retire to Hanover. Even the enormous resources of the Civil List no longer sufficed to ensure a majority in the House. Every man in the kingdom, except the King and the "King's Friends," saw that it was come to this—peace, or ruin. George the Third would have preferred ruin; if he finally submitted to peace, it was only because he could no longer find "ten men to stand by him" while he ran the ship upon the rocks. He bowed at last to the inevitable—but it was to the inevitable of not finding

[1] See Rodney's letter about his Spanish captures.

the ten men, and he always owed North a grudge for driving him to it.

NOTE.—"Had the Marquis been so very weak as to yield, perhaps his Majesty might have comforted himself with duping, exposing, and ruining him with his party, and in the eyes of the public, and not continued to meditate a project that spoke nothing but unconquerable obstinacy and childish desperation. He not only talked of retiring to Hanover, but it is most certain that for a fortnight together the Royal yacht was expeditiously preparing for transporting him—what farther steps he meant to take I do not pretend to know, nor whether he had digested any plan; whether his secession was to be permanent or temporary, whether he meant to leave the Queen Regent, or to carry her and her younger children with him. . . . The thought, however, was not novel; I have heard from the best authority that in the heat of Wilkes' war on him, he had meditated a parallel retreat."—H. Walpole, *Last Journals*, ii. 520.

CHAPTER CXV

A GLIMPSE BEHIND THE SCENES

"At last the fatal day has come which the misfortunes of the times and the sudden change of sentiments of the House of Commons have drove me to of changing the Ministry, and a more general removal of other persons than I believe ever was known before. I have to the last fought for individuals, but the number I have saved, except my Bedchamber, is incredibly few. . . . The effusion of my sorrows has made me say more than I had intended, but I ever did and ever shall look on you as a friend, as well as a faithful servant."—*The King to Lord North*, March 27, 1782.

WHEN the King wrote this, he had not looked at North's accounts. By the 18th of April the royal gratitude had changed to sharp reproach, and he was writing to his faithful servant that he wondered that, "knowing for some weeks that the Ministry would be changed, he did not make up the accounts and bring the payments up to the time; for his successor will certainly not think himself obliged to pay up the arrears." Some have three quarters, some a year, and Lord Northampton has ten quarters due. The quarterly books of the Secret Service are not made up beyond April 5, 1780—two years not stated! "I cannot help saying it is the most shameful piece of neglect I ever heard." No business can be admitted as an excuse. The Duke of Grafton never let a month elapse after the quarter without getting the book finished and delivering it. There is "the list paid by Mr. Robinson to Peers—I shall give it to the First Lord of the Treasury. Those to members of the House of Commons cannot be given; they may apply if they please to Lord Rockingham; but by what he has said to me, I have not the smallest doubt he will refuse to bring their applications, as well as those of any new sollicitors, in that House. This is a natural consequence of the total change I have been driven to. I foretold the measures that would be expected, but Lord North, as well as the rest, who advised my treating with Opposition, would not credit my assertions."[1] Thus

[1] "Sir Jas. Cockburn's pension I will set down in the name of his wife, and Mr. Bowlby's in that of Lady Mary."

the unhappy King drops all attempt to conceal his despair at being unable to bribe his Lords and Commons any longer.

He had made another dreadful discovery. "As to the immence expense of the general election, it has quite surprised me; the sum is at least double of what was expended any other general election since I came to the throne, and by the fate of the last month proves most uselessly. Certainly the £13,000 to Mr. Drummond I shall by degrees pay off; but I cannot bind myself any further. . . . I cannot conclude without saying that I am sorry to see there has been such a strange waste of money."

In answer to these unkind reproaches, North, "with a heart full of the deepest affliction at having incurred his Majesty's displeasure, humbly throws himself at his Majesty's feet, and implores his attention to a few words that he presumes to offer in explanation of the delay in the accounts."

The "S.S." (Secret Service) list was always ready after every quarter. Mr. R[obinson], "whose list is of a nicer nature," always entered every sum he paid, the moment he paid it, so every article of his account is in perfect order, regularly checked by his banker's book; but they were not extracted and copied fair for his Majesty at the proper time, as Lord North wished. Lord North pressed Mr. R. a hundred times to make up his accounts; this has been the greatest of the many sources of uneasiness of Lord N.'s mind for some years past. "It has embittered his life." But in justice to Mr. R. he is obliged to say that "he was every moment interrupted by the current business, and such a constant hurry and press of business as he had to undergo for these last three years was, as Lord North believes, never known." Then as to the pensions—they were never paid but on application, and several have not applied for some time.

This almost looks as though some of the pensioners found their consciences trouble them, as the public situation became more and more alarming. It will be observed that while the King is so hard on "neglect" in sending up the Accounts of bribery, he never expressed to North any sense of Germaine's neglect in not sending Howe orders to co-operate with Burgoyne. And North represents the delay in settling the Bribery Account as what "embittered his life," and not the miserable failure of his policy and the calamities of the country.

North goes on to the Election Account. "Lord N. never received it till he sent it to his M——y on the 27th of March last. He had for some months past pressed Mr. R. to let him see it, but Mr. R. was not able to give him a compleat state of it before.

If Lord N. had thought that the expence attending elections and re-elections in the years 1779, 1780, and 1781 would have amounted to £72,000 he certainly would not have advis'd his Majesty to have embark'd in any such expence."[1] But he thinks he can account for it. The account contains—beside the expenses of the General Election—those of the Hampshire contest in 1779, and of the elections of Bristol, Coventry, and Gloucestershire, and £2000 for sundry smaller elections. He fears the £2000 sent to the Duke of Chandos and Sir R. Worsley bore a very small part of this expense. It is said that Mr. Chester—in the great contest for Gloucestershire—spent from twenty to thirty thousand pounds, yet at his death left from three to four thousand unpaid. This debt was a great prejudice to the friends of Government in the contest which followed Mr. Chester's death; and "to assist in removing it," £2000 was paid. The sitting members for Coventry "had stood three contested elections, tried before the Committee, and a long examination at the Bar of the House, in the course of a year and a half, before they made any application." It was after all these sufferings that they received the pitiful £2000. "The general election at Bristol cost but £1000 to Government, but Mr. Lippingcot's death bringing on a fresh contest on the back of the former, the merchants of Bristol, who had contributed largely in the first contest," thought they might without impropriety apply for assistance. They received at different times £5000. North encloses a little note of what may be called Sundries.

"Expences in the account, not incurred at the general election—

Hampshire	£2,000
Gloucestershire	2,000
Coventry	2,000
Bristol	5,000
Sundry re-elections	2,000
	£13,000"

[1] North had been far from giving satisfaction in all these transactions. Selwyn was very angry about Luggershall. Lord Melbourne "says that he purchased his seat at Luggershall. It is a falsehood. If he did, he has not paid the money he ought for it; but both Lord N[orth] and Robinson have acted in this towards me, in the most scandalous manner in the world, and I will inform the K[ing] of it myself by an audience, if I can find no other means of doing it."—*To Carlisle*, March 18, 1782.

Even Robinson, who had pleaded North's cause so eloquently, was not

This would seem to be the £13,000 which the King says he will pay Mr. Drummond "by degrees."

North says he was "very unwillingly drawn into the contest for Westminster, Surrey, and the City of London," but the necessity of strengthening the Government and weakening the Opposition, prevailed on him "to advise the beginning which drew on the subsequent expence."

It is no wonder that the King was frightened when he saw the bills—the Westminster election cost more than £8000 (but worth it if it could have kept out Fox); Surrey, £4000; the City, another £4000—and unhappily all to no purpose, "and therefore the expence is the greater grievance." But in justice to the members who were "assisted to come into Parliament," North must say that "they all behaved with steady attachment to the end."[1]

Having thus done justice to the friends of Government, who sold their country so dear, and stuck so manfully to their bargain, North falls to more apologies and explanations of a highly interesting nature. The last general election—if he remembers correctly—cost near £50,000 to the Crown—beyond which there was a pension of £1000 a year to Lord Montacute (*sic*), and £500 a year to Mr. Selwyn, "for their interest at Midhurst and Luggershall." The elections of 1779, 1780, and 1781 will cost £53,000, but no additional pensions have been promised—"nay, Lord Montagu's pension is struck off because two friends of Government, Mr. Sampson Gideon and Mr. Drummond, purchas'd with their own money, at Lord North's recommendation, the two seats at Midhurst," so that, all things considered, this election will not have been "so burthensome to his Majesty" as the last.

After confessing this unhandsome trick played on the owner of Midhurst, North again reminds his Majesty of the importance at that time "to secure a number of friends in the House of Commons."

satisfied with North's treatment of himself. Jefferson wrote to him on September 2, 1780, "I agree with you that he does not treat you as he ought." His nature is "more influenced by importunity than by service. . . . The idea of your quitting the King's service can never take place. . . . The Government could not go on without you."—*Abergavenny Papers*, p. 35.

[1] Among these faithful hirelings must be reckoned Archibald Macdonald, who once turned restive, but repented on being made one of his Majesty's Counsel, J.P. of the Counties of Carmarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan, for the town and county of Haverford West, and for the borough of Carmarthen: and "William Adam, Esq., treasurer and paymaster of his Majesty's Ordnance." It was really worth a man's while to support Government while it was engaged in losing an Empire.

"The Opposition was eager, numerous, and powerful; the times were distressing upon gentlemen, very few of whom were able to assist themselves so well as in former times." (Does this refer to the cruel difficulties now besetting the efforts of a contractor?) In fact, "till the calamity of Yorktown the Parliament appeared very friendly to the last Administration." He ends with abject expressions of devotion, of his ever-present sense of his own unfitness for the office he held, and reminders to his gracious Sovereign of how repeatedly he has represented that unfitness, and how the "uneasiness of his mind arising from the consciousness of being inadequate, greatly impaired his faculties, and is now, he fears, undermining his constitution." He implores his Majesty not to embitter the remainder of his days, by withdrawing that good opinion, which he has endeavoured to deserve "by the sacrifice of his own inclination."

To this his Majesty replies that Lord North cannot be surprised that "a mind truly tore to pieces should make me less attentive to my expressions." He thought (and still thinks) the accounts should have been given in, but he does not withdraw his good opinion, and Lord North will recollect that "I foretold the consequences if a total change was made."

NOTE.—Hallam says of corruption at Elections: "The sale of seats in Parliament, like any other transferable property, is never mentioned in any book that I remember to have seen of an earlier date than 1760."—*Constitutional History*, ii. 447. Hallam thinks the practice of direct bribery, by systematic distribution of money by the Crown to representatives of the people, ceased about the termination of the American war.

CHAPTER CXVI

THE FIRST NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE

"We make daily great improvements in *natural*—there is one I wish to see in *moral*—philosophy: the discovery of a plan that would induce and oblige nations to settle their disputes without first cutting one another's throats."—*Franklin to Dr. Richard Price*, Passy, Feb. 8, 1780.

"O that men would cease to be wolves to one another!"—*Franklin to Dr. Priestley*, Passy, Feb. 8, 1780.

THE Second Rockingham Cabinet came in on these measures: Unconditional Independence as the basis of Peace with America; The establishment of Economy by the revival of Burke's Establishment Bill; the annihilation of "Influence" over both branches of the Legislature. And, as sixteen years before, the most pressing business was reconciliation with America.

Rockingham's Second Administration was shorter still than his First; but during the three months that he lived, even the unfriendly and prejudiced Horace Walpole confesses that useful measures were passed, and that the Contractors' Bill, the Bill to disqualify Revenue Officers (as servants of the Crown) from voting at Elections, and the setting on foot of negotiations for peace, were "great services." The repeal of the 6th George I, cap. 5,[1] produced such an effect on Ireland (then on the point of rebellion) that the grateful country immediately voted 20,000 seamen for the British Navy.[2]

[1] Moved by Shelburne in the Lords and by Fox in the Commons, May 17. It passed *nem. con.* in both Houses. Lord Newhaven said that as soon as Fox's speech had been read in Ireland, there would not be a dry eye from one end of the Island to the other, "*every man would get drunk and cry for joy.*"—*Parliamentary History.*

The 6th Geo. I declared the right of the British Parliament to legislate for Ireland. This must not be confounded with the famous "Poynings' Act" of 1495, by which no Parliament was to be held in Ireland, until the Acts it intended to pass were "certified into England."

[2] "Rockingham's Cabinet emancipated the trade of Ireland, abolished appeals from Irish to English Courts. And the question of reform in Parliament was for the first time seriously considered. It was proposed by William Pitt. Burke was

The student of these times is now aware of a great change, comparable only to the lifting of a blight by the quickening influence of the wind. Burke spoke but too prophetically when he said that the battle was won—far from that, a great political catastrophe was close at hand, whose baleful consequences project like a black shadow over fifty years of English history. But there was an instant difference—a lightening, a quickening in that intangible but all-important thing, which for want of any other comparison so appropriate, we liken to the air we breathe. And those who think that government by the will of a King differs only in degrees and not in kind from government by the will of a people, would do well to consider the change which came over the spirit of things in this country, the moment an honest and independent Minister returned to office.[1]

As soon as the paralysing influence of the King's will ceased to be the sole controlling power, there was new life in all departments. The first thing to be attended to was the defence of the country—left naked to her incensed opposite neighbours while Ministers recruited German troops to fight in America. Shelburne wrote circular letters to all the most important towns, suggesting the immediate levy of volunteers, after the manner of Ireland. The party lately in power began to talk about military rule, and danger to liberty; but they were answered that nothing is so great a safeguard against military rule as a volunteer citizen army. Next, Keppel began to busy himself at the Admiralty in a very different fashion from Sandwich's useless and mischievous activity; and though the state of the Fleet was much lower than the retiring Ministry had told him to expect, it was soon "carried through zeal and alertness to a pitch which ordinary exertions could never have effected."

Rockingham came in to make peace—the most difficult and complicated peace this country ever had to make.[2]

No time was lost. On March 29 the Cabinet agreed that

beside himself, but was persuaded not to attend the debate. Fox was lukewarm. Shelburne supported it. It was lost by abstention and opposition of many Rockinghamites."—BANCROFT.

[1] The Associations, who were warm for Parliamentary reform, met at York on April 4, and "agreed to trust the new Ministers at least for the present, and adjourned for a year, to give them a fair trial."—Walpole, *Last Journals*, 1782.

Richmond, who believed in the right of every man to vote, had made his Colleagues promise to examine the mode of representation.

[2] The account of the Peace-negotiations is taken from Lord Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, the letters of Thomas Grenville, and the accounts left by Franklin, Jay, and Adams, etc.

Fox, as Foreign Secretary, should try to arrange a separate peace with Holland, through the mediation of Catherine. He was to tell Simolin, the Russian Ambassador to London, that the King was willing to enter into a treaty with Holland, "on the footing of free navigation according to the treaty of 1764," and would consent to an immediate cessation of hostilities. Simolin communicated the offer to the States-General, without waiting for instructions from St. Petersburg. At first Catherine seemed to favour the idea of mediating; but the Armed Neutrality stood in the way. Fox's scheme was for a Defensive Confederacy of the North—Russia and Prussia to unite with Great Britain to oppose the inordinate pretensions of the House of Bourbon. But Frederick, old and weary, and always inclined to France, had never forgiven the Peace of 1763. Shelburne thought our best policy was an alliance with France, "as in the days of Elizabeth, Cromwell, and Walpole." He believed that in France "the rage of soaring in armies was abated." He thought there was a great difference—more independence, and a dislike of wars to acquire more territory.

But just now in France the war party (headed by Marshal de Castries) was in power, feebly opposed by de Vergennes, who knew that the finances of France demanded peace. De Vergennes had come in as the representative of de Choiseul, whose warlike traditions he could not entirely throw over. And to give these traditions a practical point, there were the complicated questions of boundaries, the adjustments of the claims of Spain to the Mississippi, and the old business of the Newfoundland Fishery. When we let our American quarrel take in France and Spain, we brought all these disputed points into the realm of practical politics, and in making peace we had to deal with them all.

There was in London a Scots merchant, named Richard Oswald. He had been a contractor in the Seven Years' War, and had great estates in America and the West Indies. He had often been consulted by Government, for his local knowledge.[1]

[1] On February 9, 1775, Oswald wrote to Dartmouth (from "Achinrue near Ayr") on the state of American commerce, and on American affairs in general. The documents fill 28 quarto pages. On a wrapper is the following in Mr. Pownall's hand: "The inclosed paper sets out awkwardly and the style is unpromising—but there is great knowledge of the subjects it treats of and a very uncommon precision and Acuteness in the reasoning and reflection upon the facts stated in respect to the Commerce and policy of Virginia. Mr. Oswald is a merchant of great Esteem and Credit.—Your Lordship's Uncle had a great Confidence in his Integrity and Ability and I believe consulted him much in matters of Commercial policy. Will it not be proper to answer his

He was a simple, straightforward man—Shelburne's enemies said he was too simple and straightforward to cope with so astute a person as Dr. Franklin. He was also "a very liberal man," and a disciple of Adam Smith, who first introduced him to Shelburne. Oswald had made the acquaintance of de Vergennes in 1777. On April 6, 1782, Shelburne wrote to Franklin: "I have had longer acquaintance with him than even I have had the pleasure to have with you.[1] I believe him an honest man. . . . He is a practical man, and conversant in those negotiations which are most interesting to mankind. This has made me prefer him to any of our speculative friends, or to any person of higher rank. . . . At the same time, if any other channel occurs to you, I am ready to embrace it. I wish to retain the same simplicity and good faith which subsisted between us in transactions of less importance."

Aware of the mighty efforts which were being made by Opposition, but before he knew of the change of Ministry, Franklin had written to Shelburne, through Lord Cholmondeley, expressing his desire for peace, and Shelburne had replied by sending Oswald, on the 6th of April, to confer unofficially with Franklin. Oswald reached Paris on the 12th, and told Franklin that the new Ministry wanted peace, but the terms must not be humiliating, or they would go on with the war. Franklin replied that nothing could be done at the moment, as he himself was the only American Commissioner in Paris—Jay being still at Madrid, Adams at The Hague, and Laurens a prisoner on parole in London. But as America could only treat in conjunction with France, he offered to take Oswald to de Vergennes. He did so on the 17th. De Vergennes and Franklin both said all they wanted was justice, but it was hinted that a good deal of justice would be wanted; and as they returned from Versailles, Franklin explained to Oswald that a part of this justice might be the cession of Canada and Nova Scotia. It would really be better for England, for the United States would not then be tempted into so close an alliance with France, but "would throw in more" with Great Britain. There would also be no danger of frontier-disputes; and the waste lands might be sold to pay for the houses burned "by the British troops and their Indians," and to indemnify the royalists for the confiscation of their estates. As Oswald was one of those who thought we should never have lost America if we had not

Letter and to encourage him to go on with what he has so ably begun?"—*Hist. MSS. Comm. Report XIV*, App. 10. Dartmouth Papers, p. 268.

[1] Shelburne had known Franklin for nineteen years.

conquered Canada, he was not greatly shocked at this suggestion. Franklin had written out the argument. Oswald asked to see the paper, and after a little hesitation Frankin gave it to him. Then Oswald asked to take it to England, and Franklin consented to his showing it to Shelburne—but to no one else. Nothing is clearer than the complete informality of the suggestion. Oswald was as yet a mere unofficial agent, sent by the English Cabinet to sound Franklin on the temper of America. The suggestion for the cession was merely a suggestion; neither then nor at any future time was *it* made a part of the terms demanded by America; and Oswald was no sooner gone than Franklin repented having given him the paper. "On reflection," he says, "I was not pleased with my having hinted a reparation to the Tories for their forfeited estates."

Franklin's extreme implacability towards the loyalists has been charged against him as rancorous. But it went far deeper than mere partisan rancour, although he regarded them with justice as the main cause why England had not come to her senses years ago. They it was who had made the British Ministry and the British public believe that the rebellion was partial, that the leaders were men of no account, and that the vast majority of Americans were eager to submit. Forgetting that such a statement carried with it their own condemnation, the loyalists represented themselves as two-thirds, four-fifths, even as nine-tenths of the whole population. They persuaded a Ministry and a people who wanted to be deceived, that a small and uninfluential minority of dishonest adventurers was able year after year to defy the vast majority of the honest and reputable, supported by the whole force of the British Empire. Thus they deceived Howe in Pennsylvania, Burgoyne in New York, Cornwallis in the Carolinas and Virginia. "Our friends" were always so numerous, that the reason why we did not immediately put down the rebellion can only have been because they were also so lukewarm and cowardly. Cornwallis' description of their riding into camp, telling him they were glad he had beaten Greene, and then riding away, without even providing for the wants of his army, is a picture of the loyalists when not in arms. When they did take arms, it was to commit outrages on civilisation, like those of Wyoming, Egg Harbour, Virginia, and New London. It is worth noting that Arnold's great deeds as a patriot commander never included this sort of warfare—he never burned towns, nor laid waste districts, until he enlisted under the British flag. It is a mortifying reflection, but one which we should do well to keep in mind; for the passions which inspire such outrages are still

alive in the human heart, and the lessons of history are never too old to teach us something for use to-day.

Oswald returned to England, and told the Cabinet that he plainly saw France and America meant to stand by each other. On the 23rd the Cabinet resolved that Oswald should return to Paris with authority to name that city as the place, and to settle with Dr. Franklin the time for beginning a negotiation for a general peace—the principal points to be "the allowance of independence to America upon Great Britain's being restored to the situation she was placed in by the Treaty of 1763"; and that Mr. Fox shall submit to the consideration of his Majesty a proper person to make a similar communication to M. de Vergennes. Oswald was to tell Franklin that if America was to be independent, she must be so of all the world—there must be "no tacit or secret" connection with France. He was also to warn Franklin not to delay—a great blow might yet be struck in the West Indies. Admiral Rodney had sailed with forty ships; de Grasse's reinforcements would probably be intercepted, "and a naval victory might settle a great deal." He was also to say that Lord Shelburne had only lately brought himself to contemplate independence—up to now he had hoped for "a Federal Union," which should give America all she wanted, without dismembering the Empire. But having been forced to abandon this hope, he would now loyally do his best for Independence.

Shelburne did not dislike Rodney as much as did the rest of the Cabinet. They had just sent out to recall him—for which they were soon to be very sorry. For the great blow had already been struck. Rodney had fought the greatest naval action of the war—one of the greatest in all our naval history, a battle which changed our naval tactics; for first of all great sea-captains, Rodney broke the enemy's line.

Fox, as Foreign Secretary, now opened negotiations with de Vergennes. He selected as his agent Thomas Grenville, brother of the present Earl Temple, and second son of George Grenville. He was a very warm friend of Fox, and, like all Fox's friends, he hated Shelburne.

At every Cabinet meeting the differences between the two Secretaries of State became more obvious. Fox was in a humour to take offence—he had expected to rule supreme, but his advice "prevailed less often than might have been expected from talents so superior," and as it was Shelburne's opinion which was preferred to his, Fox was always complaining of Shelburne's "aggressions."[1]

[1] Grafton's *Memoirs*.

Shelburne, on his side, complained to Grafton and Camden that Fox was trying to "force on a rupture." The King wrote to Shelburne that "the many grievances broached" seemed intended "to offend Lord Shelburne," and perhaps have thrown him off his guard; "but I know he is too well aware of their arts to be ever surprised at them."[1]

Presently Fox began to suspect Shelburne of wishing to get the French negotiations also into his hands.[2] In this he was mistaken. The King had indeed suggested to Shelburne that "Oswald might be a useful check on that part of the negotiation which was in other hands," but Shelburne never acted on this suggestion, and carefully concealed it from Oswald.

Oswald was to show Franklin a copy of the Minute of April 23, but to leave no copy with him, and was to say that there could be no compensation for destruction of property. Oswald's last instructions ended thus—

It is reasonable to expect a free trade to every part of America. All debts to British subjects are to be secured. The Loyalists to be restored to the full enjoyments of their rights, and their indemnification is to be considered. "Lord Shelburne will never give up the Loyalists. The Penn family have been sadly used, and Lord Shelburne is personally interested in them, and thinks it his duty to be so for all." "Lastly, he was not to conceal from Franklin that Shelburne had reluctantly come into the idea of the complete independence of America; but that having been forced by circumstances to abandon his own plan he would loyally try to carry through the other."[3]

[1] The King to Shelburne, June 1, 1782.

Bancroft says the Cabinet respected Shelburne's right to conduct the American negotiations, "but Fox, leagued with young men as uncontrollable as himself, resolved to fasten a quarrel upon him, and to get into his own hands the whole negotiations for peace." At a Cabinet meeting on April 12, he told Shelburne and those who sided with him, that he was determined to bring the matter to a crisis; and on the same day he wrote to one of his young friends: "They must yield entirely. If they do not, we must go to war again; that is all: I am sure I am ready." Oswald was then on his way to Paris.

When Fox chose Grenville, he said it did not matter much how soon he broke up the Cabinet.—BANCROFT, v. 536–7. (Ed. 1885.)

[2] On the 28th of April, Fox wrote to Fitzpatrick, "Upon the pretence of the business having begun with the American ministers, Shelburne had a great mind if I had consented to have kept even this negotiation in his own hands." But on the same day Shelburne wrote to Franklin, "It is also determined that Mr. Fox, *from whose department that communication is necessarily to proceed*, shall send a proper person."

[3] Instructions to Oswald. *Lansdowne MSS.*

"The private paper" about Canada was civilly shelved, but Shelburne repeats that Independence cannot be granted unless the loyalists are "taken care of," and hints at compensation for handing over New York, Charlestown, and Savannah. Oswald also carried a friendly private letter from Shelburne to Franklin, informing him that Mr. Laurens was released on bail, and that transports were getting ready to take the American prisoners to be exchanged.

Fox had still another agent in Paris—Thomas Walpole, sent to negotiate with the French Government on behalf of the inhabitants of St. Eustatius, about compensation for the merchandise taken from them by Rodney. Walpole seems to have thought he ought to have the greater negotiation too, and to have felt aggrieved by the presence of Oswald and Grenville. He complained that Shelburne was intriguing against him. Shelburne at once directed Oswald to call on Walpole and assure him that he had not the least intention of interfering in the negotiations with France. "If you find the least suspicion of this has reached Dr. Franklin, or M. le Comte de Vergennes, I desire the matter may be clearly explained to both. I have too much friendship for Dr. Franklin, and too much respect for M. de Vergennes, with whom I am perfectly acquainted, to let them believe me capable of an intrigue. . . . I would not remain where I am if such ways were necessary. But I must do the King the justice to say, that his Majesty abhors them." (May 21, 1782.)

We may acquit Shelburne of trying to meddle with Fox's province; but it is by no means certain that his Majesty abhorred such ways—it was his Majesty's favourite plan to lead one Minister on to speak freely of another, and then to repeat to the other what the first had said, often to the separating of very friends.[1] Few things would have pleased the King better, than that Shelburne, working through Oswald, should have got the negotiation with de Vergennes out of Fox's hands altogether. Oswald's whole conduct, however, shows his transparent honesty—and whatever politicians may think, transparent honesty is the best way of dealing even with the most astute antagonist. He now told Franklin at once that as there was to be a general peace, it would be Mr. Fox's business, and Grenville was to be the agent; and until Grenville arrived, Oswald

[1] Shelburne said to a friend of Nicholls, that George III had one art beyond any man he had ever known; "for that by the familiarity of his intercourse, he obtained your confidence, procured from you your opinion of different public characters, and then availed himself of this knowledge to sow dissention." —Nicholls' *Recollections*, i. 389. *Memorials of Fox*, i. 479; ii. 65.

was so reticent that Franklin wondered why he had been sent back to Paris at all.

Grenville reached Paris on the 8th of May, and saw Franklin and Oswald the day after. He came instructed to say that if Independence was granted, England would expect the restitution of all the islands except those of St. Pierre and Miquelon. It seems that many in England—and even Fox himself—were simple enough to suppose that France would accept American Independence as "valuable consideration," and would ask no more. "Look back on your own wars," said de Vergennes to the English Commissioners. "In the last war what was the object? The disputed right to some lands on the Ohio, and the frontier of Nova Scotia. *Were you satisfied with recovering them?* No—at the peace you kept all Canada, all Louisiana, all Florida, Grenada, and the other West India Islands, and the greater part of the Northern Fisheries—and all your conquests in Africa and the East Indies." England must bargain with America, not with France, for "valuable consideration," in return for Independence. Grenville went away much dejected, and on the 14th Oswald again returned to London.

On the 18th the Cabinet agreed that Fox should give full powers to Grenville to make proposals for a general peace. The same evening came the news of Rodney's great victory. There was universal joy; and great obloquy was poured on the Cabinet. They had recalled Rodney, lest he should perform any more exploits like that of St. Eustatius. But this victory atoned for everything, and they would gladly have countermanded the recall. They sent two frigates, one after another, but they arrived too late. The transfer of command to Pigot had been made, and even the honours showered on Rodney could not silence the King's Friends, whose own admiral it was who had beaten de Grasse. They quite forgot how they had left Rodney in Paris, for years, without even his salary as Rear-Admiral of England, and had let old Marshal Biron pay his debts, before he could come home to take up the command that was offered him at last. But the Parisians remembered, and had just been mobbing Biron at the Opera, for lending Rodney the money which set him free to go and fight France.

The great battle was fought off Martinique. De Grasse was on his way to join the Spanish Admiral at Cape François, and go to Jamaica with the whole armament—nearly fifty sail of the line. Jamaica must have fallen, and then they meant

to take all the sugar islands from Jamaica to Barbadoes. Rodney would not have caught de Grasse, but one of the French 74's ran against the great *Ville de Paris* in the night, and was crippled, and the fleet was delayed to save her. The fight began at sunrise of the 12th of April, and raged all day. When de Grasse surrendered, "he had not a sail left, nor a mast fit to carry it." In eleven hours there had not been seven minutes' respite. Five ships were taken, another sank, and the rest were much shattered. When Lord Cranston, Captain of the *Formidable*, went aboard the *Ville de Paris* to take possession, and receive the Admiral's sword, the blood was over his shoe-buckles at every step between the fore and main-masts. The carnage had been "prodigious"; and numbers of sheep and cattle, which were stowed away between decks, had suffered no less than the crew. "On the Quarter-deck, which remained still covered with dead and wounded, only de Grasse himself, together with two or three other persons, continued standing." The French Admiral had received a contusion in the loins from a splinter, but was otherwise unhurt—"a remarkable circumstance, as he had been exposed during the whole action to a destructive fire, which had swept away almost all his officers, and repeatedly cleared the quarter-deck."[1]

It was a great victory, but it was a wonder we gained it; for Rodney's private letters say that party and faction were so violent in the fleet, that there were officers of high rank, and unquestionable courage, who so hated Sandwich that they would almost have wished for defeat to get Ministers dismissed —for they did not yet know that the North Administration had fallen. The country went mad with joy. Every town was illuminated. St. Eustatius was forgotten.

An attempt was made to improve the occasion into a vote of censure. On May 30th Mr. Rolle moved that the recall of Admiral Rodney was likely to destroy the unanimity of

[1] "He was a tall, robust and martial Figure; presenting in that Moment an Object of Respect, no less than of Concern and Sympathy." Cranston said he could not recover from his astonishment at seeing, "in the course of so short a time, his vessel taken, his fleet defeated, and himself a prisoner." Rodney showed this gallant man every attention and regard.—WRAXALL.

"We had been habituated, during so long a Time, under Keppel, Byron, Hardy, Parker, Graves, Geary, Darby, and their Successors, to indecisive or unfortunate Engagements . . . that the Nation began to despair of recovering its former Ascendancy on the Ocean."—WRAXALL. Within two years Rodney had taken prisoner one French, one Dutch, and two Spanish Admirals.

the navy in the West Indies, and was a mark of this country's ingratitude to the gallant Admiral. If he was recalled on account of his health, why was not Sir Samuel Hood given his command? Admiral Pigot had not been to sea for twenty years, and never was in "a capital action." Rosewarne, in seconding, said the late Ministry were accused of not employing the most able officers, but at any rate they were never guilty of recalling one who was universally beloved, and was performing such acts of gallantry. Townshend said Hood could not be put over his seniors—Sir Peter Parker and Admiral Graves—they must come home if Hood was to have the chief command. Others said that when Rodney was recalled he was far from popular—St. Eustatius had made him extremely unpopular—no one was in the least disgusted to hear his recall. Nugent admitted this, and that Ministers did well *then* to recall him—but now the tide had turned. "In a vein of pleasantry," Mr. Hill, while opposing the motion, said he felt nothing but gratitude and admiration—he would have no objection to the gallant Admiral's being made a Duke. At this very time he was one of many Salopian gentlemen who were raising, on one of the highest hills in Shropshire, a monument to perpetuate the memory of his glorious victory. He was the less surprised at Lord Rodney's return than the world had been when he was sent out last, in so bad a state of health, that his death was several times announced, after the late Ministry had sent him to sea. It reminded him of the last contest for the chair of the House, when the late Speaker was said by the late Ministers to be afflicted with every disorder, at a time when he himself declared he had never been better. He concluded by asking for a day of Thanksgiving. North assured Hill that Lord Rodney was quite as anxious to go to sea as Ministers were to send him. So then Opposition fell back on asking why Pigot, and not Hood, had been appointed to succeed Rodney.

During the debate, Commodore Johnstone—now in pronounced Opposition—made some very interesting and curious remarks, which reflect backwards on Chatham's acceptance of a peerage, but were only intended by Johnstone to spite Fox. Johnstone asked—apropos of Rodney's being made a baron—whether his seat in that House could be pronounced vacant, before it was known if Rodney meant to accept? *Was a man forced to be made a peer?* "He begged to suppose a case; if the King had been pleased to call a certain gentleman in his

eye (Fox) to the House of Peers, about four weeks ago, the late revolution in the ministry would, in all probability, never have taken place. Such a power in the Crown might be used for the very worst of purposes; a minister might rid himself of every formidable opponent in that House, by forcing a peerage on him; nay, it might be employed to the most iniquitous purposes; as if, in a case like that of Mrs. Shebbeare, where a woman was restrained by Will from marrying a peer, a minister should, in order to prevent a commoner, whom she liked, from marrying her, make that commoner a peer. But there was another case, in which it might be the instrument of the most flagrant injustice; for there was then on the table a report from a private committee, full of charges against the admiral; now, the circumstance of his being called up to the House of Peers would deprive him of the opportunity and privilege of defending himself in that House, where the charge originated."

Fox said he had asked the lawyers, and found the general opinion was that the King could make a man a peer against his will—but in such a case he must do it by writ. Here the peerage was conferred by patent, and it depended on the person to be made a peer whether he would take the patent or not.[1] The House must wait to issue a new writ for Westminster till they knew Sir George's decision. The Speaker (Cornwall) said the distinction between writ and patent did not immediately strike him, but it might be right; the King's pleasure in all matters of patent was never irrevocably known till they had passed the Great Seal—till then, any favour might be revoked. A few days after Captain Rodney told the House there was no doubt his father would accept, and the writ was issued.

On the 3rd of May, 1782, Wilkes once more moved for the expunging from the Journals of the House the Resolution relating to his expulsion — "as being subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors of this kingdom." Byng seconded, and Fox opposed it, in a curious, rasping speech—he thought it good that the House should have the power of declaring a man unworthy to sit among them — it might be useful to exclude contractors. However, the voice of the people was against the privilege, so he would not preserve it "to make use of against the people." The motion was carried by 115 to 47. So it was ordered that "all the declarations, orders, and resolutions of this House, respecting the election of John Wilkes, esq. for

[1] The precedent of poor Yorke was quoted to show that a man could not be considered a peer till his patent had passed the Seal.

the County of Middlesex, as a void election, the due and legal election of Henry Lawes Luttrell, esq. into parliament for the said county, and the incapacity of John Wilkes, esq. to be elected a member to serve in the said parliament, be expunged from the Journals of this House, as being subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors of this kingdom." And so they were expunged "by the clerk at the table"; and Wilkes won his great fight with King and Parliament at last.

On the 23rd, the Cabinet had resolved to take de Vergennes at his word, and instruct Grenville[1] to propose to France that England should acknowledge Independence, "in the first instance,"—that is, that she should negotiate with America directly, and not through France. Somehow or other Shelburne persuaded the King to acquiesce—it cannot be said he ever agreed. "Independence," he wrote on the 25th, "is to be the dreadful price offered to America." Shelburne only got him thus far by telling him that this would either bring about a general peace, or would separate America from France. In the hope that it would do the latter, and so America might find herself alone, the King allowed the instruction to be given to Grenville.[2]

The line taken by the British Cabinet was Independence, and the *status quo*. But first the "Enabling Bill" had to pass, removing the penalties imposed on all persons who communicated with the revolted provinces. Fox intended to tell his colleagues, whenever the question of an Envoy came up, that the Minute of May 23 recognised Independence, and *ipso facto* transferred the negotiation from the Colonial to the Foreign Department—that is, from Shelburne to himself.

Shelburne now wrote to Carleton and Digby—the military and naval chief-commanders in America—telling them that Independence was to be proposed at once, instead of making it the condition of a general peace. This was to be communicated to Congress, immediately, or through General Washington. "You must convince them, that the great object of this country is, not merely peace, but reconciliation with America on the noblest terms and by the noblest means."

Oswald was to tell Franklin that the settlement with America was

[1] Grafton says that on Oswald's return Fox wished to place the whole negotiation in the hands of Grenville, but the Cabinet decided that as Franklin wished for Oswald, and had spoken to him with freedom, it would be impolitic to withdraw him.

[2] By the end of June—when Rodney's victory had greatly cooled the desire for peace—the Commissioners in Paris feared that a separate treaty might be made with Carleton in America—the King's agents were at work there.

to be "on a more friendly footing" than the peace between Great Britain and France, "who have always been at enmity with each other." But an establishment for the loyalists must always be uppermost in Mr. Oswald's mind, as it is uppermost in Lord Shelburne's. Oswald departed, carrying letters from Fox to Grenville, desiring him to claim the right to negotiate. And now a fresh complication occurred. Grenville's "power" omitted Spain. This Grenville explained by the fact that he had been unable to extract anything as to the views of d'Aranda, the Spanish Ambassador to Paris. D'Aranda was waiting till he heard from Madrid, and Madrid was waiting to hear from Gibraltar. The last great assault was just about to be made. Nor could Grenville get anything out of Berkenroode, the Dutch Minister. America also was omitted from Grenville's "power."[1] In a conversation with Franklin, he attributed this to his power having been carelessly copied from "that given to Mr. Stanley," when Stanley was sent to negotiate the peace of 1763! This did not satisfy de Vergennes. He suspected the truth—that Rodney's victory had made England less anxious for peace with France, and that she was trying to treat separately with America. But national feeling in France had been aroused by the great disaster off Martinique, and strenuous efforts were being made to replace the fleet which had been lost. De Vergennes did not conceal his suspicions from Grenville—the Treaties must all be signed on the same day. Franklin supported him, and gave Oswald a copy of the French Treaty, and Grenville sent a courier to London for an extension of his powers.

Sheridan, meantime, — while suggesting perfectly unmerited doubts of Oswald,[2]—was writing to Grenville on Fox's behalf, that it would be better not even to mention America in the French treaty. Sheridan was for giving up more to France, if that would prevent her appearing as the champion of America. "Were I the

[1] Fox sent Grenville a Commission which empowered him to treat with France. No other country was mentioned, yet the letter was all about America. —BANCROFT.

[2] He said that "Oswald and all these *city* negotiators insinuate themselves into these sort of affairs merely for private advantages . . . stock-jobbing views." He even called it "officiousness" when Oswald civilly carried a despatch for Grenville; and insinuated that he knew of "other things" which he had "been told by those who know him." There is not a shadow on Oswald's reputation, and Shelburne's enemies were reduced to abusing Oswald as a simple honest fool who allowed Franklin to outwit him. As for "jobbing," owing to Shelburne's precautions in keeping the progress of the negotiations out of the public press, there was unusually little speculation on the peace.

Minister, I would give France an island or two to choose, if it would expose her selfishness, sooner than let her *gain the esteem of the Americans*, by claiming anything essential for them in apparent preference to her own interest." If France claims Independence for America, "it will for ever be a most handy record and argument for the French party in that country to work with." These and many other similar observations from others show that no one seems to have thought that America would ever be great enough to have a place of her own—all the British politicians take for granted that she will always be somebody's hanger-on!

It seemed as though the American War was doomed to differ to the very end from other wars. The negotiations for peace were like no other peace negotiations—they lasted longer, and were often on the point of breaking down altogether. As though the difficulty of negotiation with so many Governments and interests was not enough, Fox's jealousy of Shelburne threatened to wreck the business. Fox is one of the most popular figures in English politics; Shelburne is forgotten, or handed on to reprobation by one historian from another; few have taken the trouble to enquire whether there was any sufficient foundation for Fox's enmity. The American negotiation belonged to Shelburne's office, as the French, Spanish, and Dutch did to Fox's, and Shelburne acted throughout with the knowledge and co-operation of the Cabinet. So far as right went, the right was with Shelburne; while as to expediency, Franklin preferred to treat with Shelburne and Oswald, though he was perfectly civil to Grenville, and always speaks well of him. The "Canada paper" was never anything more than the private suggestion of Franklin, never brought forward by him except as an "advisable" article. And though there is no evidence that Shelburne ever tried to take the foreign negotiations out of Fox's hands, it is absolutely certain that Fox tried—and tried hard—to take the American out of Shelburne's. The correspondence of all the parties makes it but too obvious that hot-headed friends like Grenville, and less honest creatures of Fox, like Sheridan, worked, intentionally or unintentionally, on Fox's jealousy of the man who was sometimes listened to in preference to himself. And now an incident caused by an oversight at the Foreign Office brought Fox's anger to a head, and was the first cause of his resolve to resign, and of all the other consequences which flowed from that resignation. For in judging of the quarrel between Fox and Shelburne, it must always be remembered that he himself admitted, in the strongest terms, that he had resolved to go, before the death of Rockingham—

therefore, before Shelburne had offended the Rockinghams by accepting the Treasury.

It happened that at an interview with Franklin — before Grenville had explained the defects in his powers—Franklin, friendly with him from the first, became still more open, and promised to think over all the points, and write his mind upon them, confiding in Grenville to state them, not as Franklin's propositions, but as his own ideas. This was to be done at their next meeting—the 1st of June. It also happened that Oswald returned to Paris on the 31st of May, and at once delivered his letters to Franklin and Grenville, but was unable, owing to Franklin's own engagements, to see him till the 3rd of June. Meanwhile Grenville had come on the 1st, as agreed, but to his great disappointment found Franklin less communicative than ever[1]—even the confidential communication of the Cabinet resolution of May 23 (offering Independence) could not unlock his lips for more than civil expressions of satisfaction. When Grenville led the conversation to Franklin's promise of four days ago, Franklin put him off—"till he should be more ready." Grenville next went to Oswald, and learned from him that Lord Shelburne had proposed to give him a commission to treat with the American Ministers, and that Franklin seemed to like it—Oswald added that he had no view but to assist the business, and was sorry there should be any differences between the two offices. And on Grenville asking, What differences? Oswald replied that the Rockingham party were too ready to give up everything.

On this, Grenville leaped to the conclusion that Franklin had withheld his confidence from himself because he was waiting to treat with Oswald. He sat down and wrote a long private letter to Fox, to tell him that Shelburne was playing him false. "You will see that this has stopped Franklin's mouth to me." And Lafayette is calling Oswald "Lord Shelburne's Ambassador." Nor is this "the first moment of a separate and private negotiation"—for Oswald, "suspecting by something I dropped, that Franklin had talked to me about Canada (though, by the bye, he never had), told me this circumstance." Then followed an account of the "Canada paper"—which Grenville admits was headed, "Notes of a Conversation," and was given with many precautions to Oswald, for fear of its being known to the French Court, to whom it was

[1] Franklin says that his coldness was caused by what appeared to him the suspicious omission of the Colonies from Grenville's Commission, and Grenville's equally suspicious explanation.

supposed not agreeable. Lord Shelburne kept it a day, as Oswald supposed, to show it to the King. Grenville adds that he does not mention this on account of the proposition itself—though he enumerates the objections—but only to show "an early trace of separate negotiation, which perhaps you did not before know." Grenville says he feels very much tempted to come over and tell Fox *vivâ-voce*. Then he entreats him to get the whole negotiation into one hand. The Spanish Ambassador will have his powers in a day or two; the Americans are here, so are the French—why not consider this a CONGRESS IN FULL FORM, and send a person of rank, such as Lord FitzWilliam? "I don't see how Lord Shelburne could object." People here have already got an idea of a difference between the Colonial and the Foreign Office—consider how much the business will suffer under these clashing interests. Such an appointment would prevent it all.

Fox wrote back that he had been obliged to show Grenville's letter to Rockingham, Richmond, and Lord John Cavendish. They were all "full of indignation." The two principal points are the Canada paper, and the commission to Oswald — certainly meant to divert Franklin's confidence from Grenville. "With these two points we wish to charge Shelburne directly;" but are resolved not to stir a step till we hear again from you, "and know precisely how far we are at liberty to make use of what you have discovered." Fox perceived that they must not compromise Franklin, by mentioning the Canada paper by name.[1] "But might not it be said that we had discovered that Shelburne had withheld from our knowledge matters of importance to the negotiation?" And might it not be said, without betraying anybody, that while the King has one accredited Minister at Paris, measures were taken for lessening his credit by announcing a new Commission which the Cabinet did not know of? "Do, pray, my dear Grenville, consider the incredible importance of this business." Perhaps, before you get this, you may have further proofs of his duplicity! Should it be a decisive rupture, or merely the recall of Oswald? Fox inclined to the rupture, but was very glad Grenville did not come over, and conjures him not

[1] Sir George Cornewall Lewis says that Franklin gave Oswald the notes, "as a suggestion, or matter for consideration; the paper was treated as confidential, and Franklin evidently did not mean it to go further than Shelburne himself." —*Administrations of Great Britain.* That Fox knew this, is shown by the admission that the Canada paper could not be used against Shelburne. See the letters which passed between Grenville and Fox. — Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne,* and *Court and Cabinets of George III.*

to take any precipitate step of this nature. He implores Grenville to remain—(Grenville had said he could not go on fighting "a daily battle with Mr. Oswald and *his secretary*"). It is of infinite importance to let people see whose fault it is if the war continues. Fox seems most of all angry that information from Franklin is cut off.[1]

Grenville's next letter says that he has no uneasiness as to the persons to whom his letter was shown, but "the explanation you wish has its difficulties," some so sacred that unless they can be kept clear, the matter must be buried in silence ("though not in oblivion"). Franklin had said his caution was caused by the delicacy of his situation with the French Court—it would be a breach of confidence to reveal that he had promised to speak plainly. "Perhaps" the Canada paper is not quite under the same circumstances. Grenville only knew of it from Oswald, who thought Franklin had told or would tell him of it. There was no express injunction of silence. Oswald said, "I think it right you should know." Oswald did not tell Grenville not to show the paper to Fox. Even if he had, Grenville confesses he should not have kept secret a matter of such importance—besides, he is almost sure Oswald said Lord Ashburton was with Shelburne when he gave the paper. As for the Commission to Oswald, you may proclaim it at Charing Cross, and say that Oswald says Franklin wishes it. He has no additional proofs of Shelburne's treachery, and is on good terms with Oswald. He does not advise Oswald's recall—thinks he had better remain, to save appearances. He also hopes that Sheridan will be more cautious what he writes by the post!

It is difficult to see here evidence of "duplicity" or "treachery." The same minute of Council which directed the sending back of Oswald with "authority" to name Paris as the place, and to settle with Dr. Franklin the time for negotiating a general peace, goes on to direct that "Mr. Fox shall submit to the King a proper person to make a similar communication to M. de Vergennes." And as neither Shelburne nor anyone else ever for a moment contemplated acting on Franklin's personal suggestion about giving up Canada, it is impossible not to suspect Fox of snatching at this pretext for breaking with Shelburne, because he had nothing more tangible.

Meanwhile, on the 3rd of June, Oswald saw Franklin, and told

[1] On June 9 Franklin heard by a letter from St. Petersburg that the States-General of Holland had acknowledged American Independence on May 19.

him there was to be a general peace, and it was Mr. Fox's business, and Grenville was the agent. And while admitting that peace was necessary to England, Oswald warned Franklin that if the Allies made too exorbitant demands, the war would become a struggle for life and death—England would go on, even though the payment of the National Debt had to cease! In reply, Franklin showed his doubts of the Cabinet's good faith. Why were the Colonies left out of Grenville's Commission? Had the Enabling Act passed? Then he spoke of the Loyalists—their estates had been confiscated by Acts of the several States, and Congress could not interfere. Moreover, compensation is England's business—America has counter-claims for damages which more than outbalance the losses of the Loyalists. At this interview, Oswald told Franklin that he personally agreed as to the cession of Canada, and had even urged it in an interview with Rockingham, Shelburne, and Fox. He thought that Rockingham and Shelburne were not so very averse, but Fox was "startled." Oswald also said that he had no personal wishes for honour or profit—he thought Mr. Grenville perfectly capable. Franklin said he thought the best way for a general peace was to treat separately with each country, under distinct commissions to the same person—it would then only remain to consolidate these several settlements into one genuine and conclusive treaty of pacification. He thought Oswald's great knowledge of America made him peculiarly fit to conduct the negotiations with America. Oswald replied that, owing to his ignorance of French, he had no desire to meddle with the rest.

On June 15, Grenville received his amended Full Power,—the amendment being, that after the words, "THE KING OF FRANCE OR HIS MINISTERS," the words, "OR ANY OTHER PRINCE OR STATE" were added. Grenville now formally acquainted de Vergennes that he was authorised to acknowledge American INDEPENDENCE in the first instance, and to offer France peace on the basis of the Treaty of 1763. He claimed the right to negotiate with Franklin. Franklin demurred, and again asked if the Enabling Act were passed? "No." "Then the words, 'OR ANY OTHER PRINCE OR STATE' cannot be held to refer to a People whom they do not allow to be a State." Grenville saw this, and wrote to Fox that the words could not apply to America till Independence was acknowledged.

Shelburne, meanwhile, wrote to Oswald to be careful not to give offence to Grenville.

De Vergennes, in his formal reply, asked that the articles of 1763, which were to stand good, should be specified. It was

obvious that he wanted delay. The Cabinet resolved if possible to separate France and America by the offer of Independence. They also tried to conciliate Russia. Fox was to tell de Simolin, that England, "without formally admitting the Armed Neutrality," would make those principles the basis of a treaty, if Russia would obtain the neutrality of Holland.

The Enabling Bill passed.[1] But a crisis was at hand. Fox was determined to have the whole of the negotiations. He demanded Oswald's recall, and at the Cabinet meeting of June 30, he moved to grant Independence at once, without any condition, even that of a treaty of peace. The Cabinet refused—Independence should be the basis of the treaty—it should start with Independence. Fox said he should resign. It was not the first time he had threatened this.

A greater crisis was at hand. Rockingham, always a delicate man, had suffered long from "water on the chest." His last appearance in the House of Lords was on June 3, when he made a short speech on the Revenue Officers' Voting Bill.[2] He then said that he was so ill "as to be scarcely capable of saying one word;"[3] and after this he could take hardly any part in business. On July 1st the King wrote to Shelburne that "those who governed Lord Rockingham" seemed to be cautiously trying to keep both himself and Lord Shelburne in ignorance of "the desperate state of that

[1] "Within 24 hours of the passing of the Enabling Act, Oswald's powers were made out, and were finished in the four days following; but on Fox's assertion that they would prejudice everything, they were kept back."—BANCROFT.

[2] The Bill was to prevent their voting at elections, on the ground that their doing so was against the freedom of Election of Members. Rockingham said that in no fewer than 70 boroughs the election turned chiefly on the votes of revenue officers—the Custom-House alone had 5000 voters, and about 2500 more in "extra tidesmen, etc." As the law stood, these persons "not only were forced to vote for those they did not approve, but those to whom they were most obliged." He gave the instance of one borough, where there were 500 voters; one of these, who happened to be intimate with the First Lord of the Treasury for many years past, "had got 120 appointed to places under government." He asked how these persons could vote against him who gave them their employment as revenue officers?

(Thomas Paine's first appearance in print was a protest against a similar Bill.)

[3] "The disorder that prevailed so universally affected him so severely, that at times he was not in possession of himself."—*Rockingham's Last Speech.* Lord Rockingham was 52. The disorder was the mysterious "influenza." On the 26th of May, Sheridan wrote to Thomas Grenville, "There is nothing odd or new to tell you, but that here is a most untimely strange sort of an influenza which every creature catches."

lord." It was remarked that the King never sent to ask how Lord Rockingham did. On the evening of the 1st, Lord Rockingham died, after intense suffering. He was perhaps the most unimpeachably honest man who was ever First Minister of England.

CHAPTER CXVII

FACTION

"That was not a moment of levity or exultation . . . he looked forward with fear and trembling . . . every gentleman who expected either to form a part of the new Administration, or intended to support it, ought to question themselves, examine their own hearts, and see, whether they had been acting upon principles that were strictly right. . . . The present was that peculiar period of men's lives, when their ambitious views, that had lain secretly in a corner of their hearts, almost undiscovered to themselves, were unlocked, when their prejudices operated most forcibly, when all their desires, their self-opinions, their vanity, their avarice, and their lust of power, and all the worst passions of the human mind are set at large, and began to shew themselves. At such a time, let men take care what they did . . . so as to preserve a perfect consistency of conduct."—BURKE, on the 22nd of March, 1782.

NEVER, perhaps, did party spirit show itself in so ugly a light as after the death of Rockingham. In the old days of Sir Robert Walpole, there were great issues at stake. Deep below the intrigues and corruption of that time lay the most vital questions of constitutional government. But now the contest was merely one for party ascendency—hardly that, it was for the ascendency of one section of a great party, which in order to obtain the ascendency was willing to ally itself with the other great party in the State. It is a most painful story—in some respects more disheartening than even the story of the North Administration; that rises to the heights of tragedy, this is an unworthy squabble, perhaps not fully explained even yet.

There were three possible Ministers besides Shelburne—Fox, Grafton, and Richmond. But the Whigs did not propose Fox, and the King would not have accepted him; Grafton's vacillating conduct in 1767 seems to have made no one wish to see him at the head of another Cabinet; and Richmond's advanced opinions on Parliamentary reform made him very unpopular with the Old Whigs, who wanted the Duke of Portland. But the King put his foot down—he refused to listen to what he called "the phalanx"—meaning Fox and his followers. He would have Shelburne and no

other.[1] An interministerium with the peace negotiations only just fairly begun would have been a dangerous risk. Shelburne accepted, without consulting his colleagues. He had hardly got a party—Burke said, only eight or nine. Dunning, the man of most importance, replied, "*Non numeremur, sed ponderemur.*"[2] In vain Shelburne offered Fox the leadership of the House of Commons; Fox resigned his Seals the moment he found that Shelburne had accepted the King's offer (July 5). Cavendish, Portland, Althorpe, Montagu, Burke, Sheridan, and Fitzpatrick (Shelburne's own brother-in-law, but his enemy and Fox's great friend) followed. But many of Fox's friends disapproved, and already there was little sympathy with him out of doors.

William Pitt, at the age of twenty-three, became Shelburne's Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Grantham and Thomas Townshend were the new Secretaries of State. Thurlow still remained as Chancellor; Keppel and Richmond retained office. Barré became Paymaster. Camden was, as before, President of Council. Earl Temple, on Portland's resignation, succeeded him in Ireland. It should be observed that none of these changes was made by Shelburne—he wished Portland to continue Lord Lieutenant.[3]

The attack on the new Ministry began at once. On the 9th of July—four days after it was formed—the House was crowded; "great anxiety prevailed to hear the reason of the very lamentable division in the cabinet." Coke called attention to the pensions for Dunning and Barré then passing the offices. No man was more sensible than he of Barré's merits, but this was not the time to reward them; and the pension was too large—£3200 a year, when a Bill was passing to limit pensions to £300. Montagu, Althorpe, Grenville, rose one after another to say that they had signed the warrant—as had "that great respectable personage, whose loss we all deplore." Then Barré spoke. He was Wolfe's Adjutant-General, and on his return from Quebec was appointed to that office at home. He was also appointed Governor of Stirling Castle. These appointments were worth £1500 a year, and though he had no right to look on them as for life, he had a right to

[1] The King reminded Shelburne that he had sent for him in March, but that he then refused, in order "to accommodate Lord Rockingham." He now offered him "the fullest political confidence." It must be confessed that the King kept this promise so far as to give very little trouble about the peace—the difficulties and dangers which beset the negotiations were not caused by George III.

[2] Shelburne had many more supporters than Burke represented.

[3] The Shelburne Cabinet consisted of seven Chathamite Whigs, two Rockinghams; Grantham was of no political party; the Chancellor represented the King.

imagine that he would only be dismissed for a military offence. But he voted against General Warrants, as a member of Parliament, and the very next day he was summarily dismissed. It was the etiquette to give a regiment to the Adjutant-General, and had Barré been less a friend to liberty, "at this day I should have been an old lieutenant-general." This pension—which he was only to receive when he ceased to be Paymaster—was not more than equal to the half-pay annexed to the rank he would now hold in the army. Though it was called £3200 it was only £2100 net. If this appeared to the House too much, let them say so; or if any honest man in the House thought that after these sacrifices he did not merit this provision, he would cheerfully give it up.

But not one man dared tell Wolfe's old Adjutant-General, with the bullet of Quebec still in his face, that his services did not entitle him to a pension after nineteen years out in the cold for voting against General Warrants. Aubrey justly called the pension the discharge of a public debt, and Fox had the grace to say that he had agreed to the grant, considered it "payment for services most honourably performed," and by no means thought it either lavish or misapplied. He also approved the pension to Ashburton —taking care to call the House's attention to the fact that "the only jobs in which the Rockingham Administration were concerned, were jobs for two men neither friendly to their persons nor principles."

Then he turned on Shelburne—openly avowing that he resigned because the Earl of Shelburne was appointed First Lord of the Treasury, instead of "that noble person," the Duke of Portland. He called Shelburne "the exact reverse" of Rockingham—a man who could not think of reformation with temper, however loudly he might speak about it—a man who could declare that the influence of the Crown ought to be diminished, and at the same time say that the King had the right to negative laws.[1] He blamed North for having remained in place "responsible for measures of which he had not cordially approved"—how then could he himself now remain? There was no longer a prospect of those principles being pursued on which the Rockingham Administration was framed. He believed the old system would be revived—"*most probably with the old men.*" He had been told that his own continuance would be taken as a proof that the principles of the Rockingham Adminstration would be rightly pursued—he should be guilty of treachery, therefore, if he stayed. Those who were now to direct the councils of this country were "men whom neither promises could bind, nor

[1] The Constitution, however, gives him this right, though since the Revolution no Sovereign has been rash enough to exercise it.

principles of honour secure. They would abandon fifty principles for the sake of power, and forget fifty promises when they were no longer necessary to their ends. *He had no doubt, but that to secure themselves in the power which they had by the labour of others obtained, they would now strive to strengthen themselves by any means which corruption could procure;* AND HE EXPECTED TO SEE THAT, IN A VERY SHORT TIME, THEY WOULD BE JOINED BY THOSE MEN WHOM THAT HOUSE HAD PRECIPITATED FROM THEIR SEATS."

Shelburne was not joined by any of "the old men"; but in less than six months from that day Fox joined Lord North.

Conway—whom all agree to call the very soul of honour—Conway, the only man Horace Walpole loved and admired with enthusiasm—replied that beyond "small and nice shades of difference" he knew of no divisions in the Cabinet. He denied that there had been any departure from principles. The principles on which the Administration was formed were, unconditional Independence to America as the basis of a negotiation for peace; a system of economy in every department, in the spirit of Burke's Bill; the annihilation of influence in every part of the legislature; and the freedoms now settled by Parliament secured to Ireland. Fox replied, still justifying himself. He had meant to resign before the death of his venerable friend, but would not embitter his last moments. The differences were of the utmost importance. The Cabinet was not for unconditional Independence when he resigned—that was a week ago; perhaps they were converted—he took the credit—he had effected more by resigning than by his presence. Then the Earl of Shelburne wanted to screen from punishment those delinquents who had destroyed the English Empire in the East. His promises of retrenchment were hypocritical. Conway asked why degrade the living to honour the dead? Lord Shelburne had one merit—he had persuaded his royal Master that American Independence was the wisest measure Government could adopt in the circumstances. Fox indignantly denied that Shelburne made the King change his mind—it was the House of Commons. Conway reminded him that the question of Independence had never been brought before the House at all! For three or four hours all the rules of the House were suspended—it was a conversation between Fox and Conway—Conway denying any abandonment of principle, Fox protesting his own honesty, and the treachery of Shelburne.

At a late hour Burke rose to support Fox. "On his rising there was an uncommon confusion at the bar." Perhaps this demonstration on the part of Shelburne's supporters coloured his speech—he showed that it angered him. After a sharp sentence

about "little unmanly and dirty artifices," intended to intimidate him from giving an account of his stewardship, he referred to Barré's pension. "He knew the noble Marquis thought himself bound for it, as he had, in the year 1766, left out the colonel by mistake, from a list of promotions." He then made some strange remarks on Rockingham, "who left his best and dearest friends with the simple reward of his own invaluable intimacy. This singular test of their sincerity he asked while alive, and it was a tax he left on their regard for his memory when dead."[1] Now he was gone, and his Majesty's Ministers had pitched on a man to succeed him of all others the most unlike him. The Duke of Portland was the person whose great talents and connections would have given weight to his Majesty's councils, and whose abilities and integrity had gained him the love of the people here, and the esteem of the people of Ireland. He would have brought about a general, a lasting peace. But now he feared all that had been done by displacing the late Ministry would be undone. Burke "called heaven and earth to witness, so help him God, that he verily believed the present ministry *would be fifty times worse than that of the noble lord, lately reprobated and removed.*" Conway had said that "he had seen nothing improper in the demeanour of Lord Shelburne under the Rockingham Administration; he will therefore try him as a premier." "Is this an impartial view? No, no—surely it is not." We must, to be candid, take the whole of his conduct, since "he affected to be a statesman." In the late premiership he was controlled—now he will do as he likes.

Burke then indulged in some undignified lamentations over the sacrifice he was making. "He had a pretty large family, and but little fortune. He liked his present office. The house, and all its appendages, to a man of his taste, could not be disagreeable." He did not relinquish all this without regret—no man in his circumstances would sacrifice £4000 a year for nothing! He

[1] This was naturally taken to be a complaint that Rockingham had not left him a legacy. Burke, however, had little right to complain of Lord Rockingham, whose delicate generosity had been often shown him. It seems that Burke had in all about £30,000 from Lord Rockingham—mostly in the guise of loans, for which Burke insisted on giving notes of hand, though it had always been understood they would never be presented. The day before Rockingham died, he sent for Lee, the Solicitor-General, and told him that various pecuniary transactions had passed between him and "his admirable friend, Edmund Burke"; to the best of his recollection all had been cancelled, but in case any had been forgotten, he begged Lee to draw up a codicil instantly, cancelling every paper acknowledging a debt due from Burke that might be found. This was done.

did it for the country. He was tired of opposition—no one who knew him would call him petulant or factious. Then he compared Shelburne to the wolf that deceived Red Ridinghood—Conway being Red Ridinghood. Conway proposed to give Shelburne a trial. Would he have given Catiline a trial? Or have joined with Borgia, after reading his accursed principles in Machiavel? "If Lord Shelburne is not a Catiline or a Borgia in morals, it must not be ascribed to anything but his understanding!"

But in six months Burke gave North a trial.

Pitt's speech marks the beginning of a twenty-three years' contest between himself and Fox. Fox had declared that he resigned to prevent dissension in the Cabinet—but for this solemn declaration, Pitt would have attributed the resignation "to a baulk in struggling for power." It was in his opinion a dislike to men, not to measures. And if the right hon. gentleman had such a dislike to Lord Shelburne's political sentiments, how came he to accept him as a colleague? And if it was only a suspicion that Lord Shelburne was averse to the measures the right hon. gentleman wished to adopt, he should have called a Cabinet Council, and made sure, before he took such a hasty step. The right hon. gentleman said that quite a different system was going to be pursued—he assured him he had no such suspicions, if he had, no one would be more averse than he to supporting such a system. He was a determined enemy to the late ruinous system, and pledged himself, that when he saw things going wrong, he would first try to set them right, and if he failed he would resign—but not before.

Fox replied that so far from being a struggle for power, he meant to resign before Lord Rockingham died, and had called a council, and put the matter before them—he weighed it well; no man could blame him for quitting a Cabinet where he must have been a mere puppet, for he knew as well how every measure would be carried the moment he knew the mover, as he used to know how gentlemen would vote on grand political questions in that House. With respect to fear of letting in the old Administration, there was none—for that House would not suffer it, the people of England would not suffer it; *indeed, no man, he believed, would attempt it.* He begged the House to believe that only some very great and material differences in politics, could make him give up a place which was not only lucrative, but powerful.

A moment before he had said he would only be a puppet—now he was giving up power.

Lee, who followed, after observing that he owed his seat to

Rockingham, said he did not wish to see Shelburne at the head of affairs; he had great talents, and some friends, but he was "of a wavering disposition," and so he did not pay much attention to his promises. He heard that the noble earl had lately been converted to American Independence, which he had till now uniformly opposed; he had also remarked that when a man attained the age of forty, his mind was made up, "otherwise he was not worth a pin." For the noble earl, therefore, to alter his opinion at his age, "must appear to answer particular purposes,"—and so perhaps he would change again, and that was one great reason why he did not want him at the Treasury. Fox said he accepted Shelburne as a colleague, with Thurlow, because he wanted an Administration on a broad basis.

Then Coke withdrew his motion, and this painful exhibition closed.

In the Lords next day Richmond lamented the resignations of two of the greatest persons who sat in the Cabinet—of one of them it would ill become him to pronounce the panegyric—his near relationship enjoined silence. The other was a noble lord whose integrity would adorn any Cabinet. It was proper for him to state why he himself remained. He had been watchful, but he had not yet observed any deviation from fundamental principles—independence of America, reform in all departments, diminution of the influence of the Crown. He declared his belief that the country would not be safe, if before the end of next session an Act were not passed to declare America independent.

Shelburne thanked him for his good opinion, and asked to be judged by his measures. He, too, lamented the loss of the splendid abilities of Fox, and the unimpeachable integrity of Cavendish. He reminded the House that when the Treasury was within his grasp he had refused it, and had persuaded Rockingham to take it. And when they pleaded consistency, he had his consistency as well as they, and it would have been strange if he had given up all those constitutional ideas "which for seventeen years he had imbibed from his master in politics, the Earl of Chatham." With a singular want of tact, and as singular a want of duplicity, he took that opportunity of repeating his views on a "King of Mahrattas." If the King is to have no power of choosing his Ministers, he is a mere puppet. He also said that his idea of American Independence was still the same; he thought it "a dreadful blow to the greatness of this country—the sun of England might be said to have set—but he meant to improve the twilight, and prepare for the rising of England's sun again." This also was "cast up" at

Shelburne; but most certainly had Chatham been alive he would have said the same.

Shelburne then referred to the debate on Barré's pension. He certainly, as one of his Majesty's Ministers, had advised the King to grant it, "but the idea of the pension had not originated with him; the proposition came from the noble Marquis, now no more"—he had a letter from that noble lord on the subject, in which he proposed the pension as a compensation to Barré for having given up his pretensions to the Pay Office. He did not think their lordships ought to deem the provision too great for a gentleman who had for twenty years been stripped of the emoluments he must have derived from his profession. That gentleman objected to a pension; he wished rather for some provision in the line of his profession, but had at last given way to the noble Marquis, and consented to accept a pension not equal to more than half the income he must have derived from the rank in the army to which he ought by this time to have been raised.

The statement as to Rockingham's having proposed the pension, is the only formulated charge against Shelburne's veracity—the rest is declamation. In the Commons, the day after, Burke abruptly introduced the subject, in the middle of a discussion on the Secret Committee's Report upon Bengal. He gave "a flat contradiction" to the statement that the pension was compensation to Barré for resigning his pretensions in favour of himself. The bargain was, moreover, one that would have been made only by a fool. The ordinary salary of the Pay Office was "just £3060 a year," but as the great emoluments of the office were now to be diverted into other channels, it had been made £4000 to himself. It must be a curious bargain to give a pension of £3200 a year to get the difference that would now subsist between the Treasury of the Navy and the Pay Office. The fact was "it was a sacrifice to unanimity"—the hon. member who obtained the pension had never been intimate with the noble Marquis—nor did he seem himself to consider it the proposition of the Marquis, for he never went to his levée to thank him. Burke went so far as to declare his disbelief in the existence of such a letter, and dared Shelburne to produce it. The guns announcing the King's arrival interrupted him, but Cavendish found time to say that if he had known he would have refreshed his memory—all he could say now was he never understood the proposal came from the Marquis, and was sure the pension was not the price of Barré resigning his

pretensions to the Pay Office. Fox "ironically" observed that there were so many gross falsehoods *in the newspaper* accounts of what Lord Shelburne had said, that he must naturally look on these accounts as infamous fabrications—the noble earl never could have said them, because he must have known they were not true. The assertion about the pension could not be true, for he had heard the Marquis of Rockingham say that the proposition did not originate with him; another false assertion was that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer resigned from a natural dislike to business and love of retirement, and "that I myself gave no other reason for resigning except the promotion of a certain lord to the Treasury." Here are three gross falsehoods attributed to Lord Shelburne in one newspaper! I shall consider the whole as an impudent libel! Then Black Rod knocked at the door.[1]

Most likely the bitterness of Burke's allusions to Rockingham on the 9th had another cause than disappointment about a legacy. The parallel between himself and Barré was very close — both were men of no fortune, who had performed great services to their party, and made great sacrifices to it. Each had lately received a lucrative office, of which the most lucrative part had been cut off by Burke's reforms—all of which Shelburne had supported. Each had been promised a provision when he should cease to hold office. Burke was to have an annuity, to be secured to his wife and son. Rockingham's unexpected death left this unarranged. When Burke spoke, he had just been disappointed in a highly indiscreet attempt to recoup himself for Rockingham's omission. At the last moment before resigning, he had gone to Horace Walpole with the extraordinary request that Horace should propose to his brother Sir Edward, then Clerk of the Pells,[2] to resign that very valuable sinecure

[1] Shelburne, in answer to Derby, had just explained to the Lords that he only said *his opinion was* that Fox resigned from no other reason.

As much has been made of the statement about Barré as about crimes in other statesmen. Especially was Shelburne's not producing the letter made a proof that he was lying. Such a letter did exist, however. It was written in March, 1782, and headed, "Memorandum on the formation of the Ministry." Lord Rockingham's words on Barré are: "Col. Barry, Treasurer of the Navy, with an increased salary in proportion to all former advantages being cut off. The extra salary to be made out to Col. Barry for his life." Barré became totally blind in 1783, and Ashburton died in the August of the same year. Shelburne's pensioners were certainly not chosen for what they could do for him in the future. And it is quite possible that so very recent a Memorandum on the formation of a Ministry might be improper to be produced.

[2] So called because it was the Clerk's duty to enter the name of every teller

in favour of Burke, in consideration of receiving the full salary for his own life. Burke promised to give full security that the £7000 a year should be forthcoming, but the transfer must be made that very day, while Lord John Cavendish still remained at the Exchequer to countersign it. We may believe Horace when he says that he thought the proposal "frantic." And, as he told Burke, it was the more hopeless because Sir Edward was a strong partisan of the war. Horace's indignation (which he says he concealed) seems to have been pretty evenly distributed between the extreme risk of the security "from a man of desperate fortune"—security which there would be no time to examine—and his other fear of the transaction leaking out, "at a moment of reformation," when it would be "the most likely of all circumstances to provoke parliament to annihilate the office." Nor were all Horace's fears for his brother—he himself held valuable sinecures, and "a patent place which had been in suspense" while Burke's Bill was going through Parliament.

Burke never set himself to abolish all sinecures. It was his theory that a few should be left, as a provision, other than by pension, for the families of men who had deserved well of the State; and on this principle he had spared all the Walpoles' places—they belonged "to the sons of a great statesman who spent his life in the public business." Burke had been promised some such provision by his generous and faithful friend, Lord Rockingham; but we need not think, with Horace Walpole, that he spared the Pells, hoping to get it for himself. The application was in all probability a sudden thought, inspired by desperation, when he resolved to follow Fox's fortunes. Burke's judgment was far from infallible, and his resignation itself was a great mistake. His own feeling, we know, was for delay. Richmond, Conway, and others remained, without breaking with their colleagues who resigned—Burke could have done the same. But the transaction he was ready to propose to Cavendish leaves him without excuse for his treatment of Lord Shelburne.

From this moment everything seems to go wrong with both Fox and Burke. Instead of the clear issues of opposition to the war and its methods, we have the sophistries by which they tried to persuade others (for it is impossible that they can have

into a parchment called the *pellis receptorum*. The Clerkship was held for life. It was the second most valuable office in the Exchequer, and during the war, the Commissioners of Accounts stated it as producing £7000 a year. It was abolished in 1834.

been deceived themselves) that while it would be infamy to act with Shelburne it was patriotic to act with North. And just as the North Administration devoted its attention to managing the House of Commons rather than to the public business, so now Fox and Burke waste their energies and their eloquence in defending their union with the man they used to denounce. Burke descended to littleness, Fox flung principle to the winds, — while professing to contend for principle, — until he fell so low that he could tell the House of Commons without a blush that he had always found North an honest man!

For two generations the retirement of the Rockingham section, with its result, the Coalition, was ascribed to Burke's dislike of Shelburne. It was natural that Fox's relatives and admirers should wish to lessen his share in a business which from beginning to end is one of the most painful episodes in our political history. But even Fox's relatives have been compelled to acknowledge that his jealousy of Shelburne was the main cause. Fox was determined to dominate in the Cabinet—if not in person, then by proxy. With the Duke of Portland as nominal, Fox would be the real head of an administration. A paper exists in the handwriting of Burke, which, far from urging immediate resignation, advises "management," and delay at least till next session. In his anxiety to whitewash his uncle, the third Lord Holland is unjust to Burke, whom he calls "always a jobber." There is not the slightest evidence to show that Burke's transactions in India Stock were not perfectly honourable. In those days the difficulty would have been to find a man who did *not* hold India Stock. Even the foolish and unworthy proposal to Sir Edward Walpole was unworthy partly because it involved secrecy, but still more because Burke was making a promise which he might have found it exceedingly difficult to keep; proposing a bargain which might easily have placed him in the way of temptation if—as was almost certain to be the case sooner or later—he found it a hard matter to hand over so large a sum punctually. But he merited the provision which ought to have been made for him—which he had been promised. In money alone he had saved the country a very large sum yearly; and if we consider that he had been the means of beginning to break down the whole system of sinecures and secret pensions, we must estimate his services higher still. In the Pay Office alone he had saved the country £47,000 a year. He had also voluntarily relinquished a lucrative contract, enjoyed by former Paymasters, for clothing

the Chelsea Pensioners — thus saving another £1300 a year. In spite of all, his great Establishment Bill had saved £73,000 a year. Like the Elder Pitt, he sent all his balances as Paymaster to the Bank of England, whereby the interest was placed to the country's account, instead of to his own, as in Henry Fox's time and Rigby's time. By keeping these balances in their own hands, speculating with them, and retaining the interest, the first Lord Holland and Rigby amassed their immense fortunes — Rigby got nearly a million of the public money into his hands, to use in this way, and when twitted with it, answered only by insolent gibes. And in the times of Pitt, Fox, and Rigby, the Pay Office was worth £7000 a year —Burke had only £4000.

If we think of Burke's services to his party, his disinterestedness cannot be denied. His tongue and his pen were equally eloquent—if he would have sold them to North, he could have asked what price he pleased. He saw one after another thus selling himself—sometimes openly, like Wedderburn and Pownall; sometimes, like Rose Fuller, only relaxing in zeal, to the puzzlement of his old friends, who did not know that he was enjoying a secret pension. When we think of what a very few years more of North and Sandwich would have meant, with Rigby at the Paymaster's Office, and Atkinson managing the contracts, we must feel that Opposition saved the country. The war would have dragged on—the King was willing it should be only "defensive," but he would never have allowed North to offer the price of peace—independence. A "defensive" war would have swallowed up immense sums yearly, while the war with France and Spain and Holland must have gone on. If the Armed Neutrality had not resulted in the actual interference of Russia, she would easily have found some means of throwing her weight into the scale against us. It would have been ruin.

Burke's action can be explained only by his monstrous claim for the perpetual ascendency of the Whig Party, and even then he was claiming it for one section only of the Whigs. Burke always detested Chatham, and Shelburne was a Chathamite of even wider views than Chatham. It was indeed a short-sighted policy which drove out a section of the party with such great traditions and such a hold on the country. The "New Whigs" not only lost Shelburne—they lost William Pitt, and their enmity and their woeful blunders gradually inclined Pitt to a far more Tory policy than he would ever have adopted had the Whig Party remained united. Perhaps all is explained—as to Burke—by

remembering that Burke abhorred "abstract theories," by which he meant fixed principles, in politics. It is true that theorists who refuse to take into account the particular situation with which they have to deal have brought about terrible catastrophes when they meddled with government. But all extremes are dangerous, and the other extreme, to which Burke went, of maintaining that politicians should look only at circumstances as they arise, might lead a politician anywhere. He had declared that he hated the very name of an abstract principle, of general maxims. Thus, though he approved of Wilberforce's efforts to abolish the African slave-trade, he was at first shy of his general resolutions against slavery. And although no man had striven more for religious liberty than Burke, the moment he fancied that the Established Church was threatened, he defended tests, quite forgetting that a test only keeps out the scrupulous. And so, when liberal principles were put to the trial in France, Burke's heart failed him, long before the period of chaos set in, and probably his conduct in 1790 was not without its effect on the struggling hopes of those who aimed at a limited Monarchy. Those who judged only from the surface were astonished at what seemed Burke's inconsistency.[1] But an opportunist is not inconsistent—he starts with the undeniable truth that circumstances alter cases, but he fails to add that there are certain elemental principles of justice which no circumstances can alter. Burke destroyed the Whig Party of his time in trying to make it supreme.

Shelburne's acceptance of the Treasury *from the King*, was, it need hardly be said, perfectly constitutional, although in practice it had long been the custom for the King to send for a Minister who could be expected to command a majority in the House of Commons. Those who made it a charge against Shelburne that he had allowed the King to nominate him, did so on the totally unconstitutional ground that the Whig Party had a prescriptive right to appoint the Minister. Burke deliberately maintained that "as the ancestors of those leaders had placed the Brunswicks on the throne, they had a right to be Ministers, and to dictate the political measures which should be pursued." It was against this monstrous hereditary pretension of the Whigs that Shelburne was protesting when he spoke about a "King of Mahrattas."

[1] Nicholls adhered to Fox even during the coalition, from gratitude for his having stopped the war. He began by admiring Burke, but his admiration "gradually diminished into disapprobation of his measures, and disapprobation increased into disesteem." This was not, however, until after the coalition.—Nicholls, *Recollections and Reflections*.

Such a claim would result in a tyranny as great as any other—it is oligarchy organised. In political principle Shelburne was far nearer Fox than Fox ever was to Burke. Fox in after years perceived the nearness of Shelburne's views to his own, but the old jealousy—Fox still called it distrust—held him aloof. The two characters were incompatible; but it is hard to forgive Fox for depriving the country of Shelburne's enlightened administration. Burke treated Shelburne as a traitor, and followed Fox in measures more Tory than those of the Tories themselves; and at last broke violently with Fox, at the very moment when Fox was cleaving to principle.

CHAPTER CXVIII

SHELBURNE

"There was not literally a single office in the Kingdom which was not worn out with corruption, relaxation, and intrigue. All the Executive Offices were sold to the enemy, by inferior persons in each department. The particulars of Admiral Barrington's instructions were communicated to the enemy, within an hour after they had been issued from the Cabinet. The trials in Hampshire, and several examinations which remain in the Secretary's Office, sufficiently prove the corruption which prevailed in them. The Revenue Offices knew no such thing as control or order. It was a general scramble. There was not a *commis* of any consequence, who had not a line of his own distinct from his principal, and a correspondence of his own to support it. Stock-jobbing prevailed to such a degree that a broker was actually lodged in the Treasury, for the purpose of more speedily acting upon intelligence on its arrival."—*Shelburne's Account of the state of things in* 1782, *when the change of Ministry took place.* (*Autobiography.*)

"Monopolies, some way or other, are ever justly punished. They forbid rivalry, and rivalry is of the very essence of the well-being of trade. This seems to be the era of Protestantism in trade. All Europe appears enlightened, and eager to throw off the vile shackles of oppressive and ignorant monopoly; that unmanly and illiberal principle, which is at once ungenerous and deceitful. A few interested Canadian merchants may complain; for merchants always love monopoly, without taking a moment's time to think whether it is for their interest or not. I avow that monopoly is always unwise; but if there is any nation under heaven which ought to be the first to reject monopoly, it is the English. Situated as we are, between the old world and the new, and between southern and northern Europe, all we ought to covet upon earth is free trade, and fair equality. With more industry, with more enterprise, with more capital than any trading nation upon earth, it ought to be our constant cry, let every market be open, let us meet our rivals fairly, and we ask no more. It is a principle on which we have had the wisdom to act with respect to our brethren of Ireland; and if conciliation be our view, why should we not reach it out also to America?"—*Lord Shelburne on the Preliminary Articles of Peace*, Feb. 17, 1783.

MANY circumstances have conspired to rob Shelburne of his just place among English statesmen. The Tories hated him as one of that determined band of Opposition who drove them from power, and began to break down the reign of corruption. The most devoted of Fox's defenders admits that his reputation

can only be vindicated by blackening Shelburne's. A free-trader before the time, a detester of wars and commercial enmities, an opposer of the claim of the Whig faction to make the King their puppet, and yet the only Minister of his time who never feared the people, Shelburne pleased nobody, and frightened many. His friendship with Priestley and Price added to his unpopularity. And although he was naturally suspicious and distrustful, he believed that men preferred good measures to bad ones, and relied on their doing so rather than on his own party management. All these things made him hopelessly in advance of his time, and nothing is so fatal to posthumous fame. A man may be too early even to be a pioneer. When at last the world comes round to his views, he is forgotten.

To no English Minister has such hard measure been dealt out as to the man who saved us from the American war. A hundredfold as much has been condoned in other statesmen than was ever even alleged against Shelburne. North himself is judged more leniently. Yet when we ask what Shelburne did to deserve so hard a judgment, we find for the most part accusations of crimes *of which he was capable.* And one of the worst of these possible crimes is a coalition with North!

Shelburne undertook one of the most invidious tasks of a Minister—the making of peace after an unsuccessful war. Such a peace is almost certain to ruin the Minister who makes it—Shelburne had but to remember how the country took the Peace of 1763. A peace never seems good enough to those for whom it is made. North, who could be bribed and cajoled into facing the consequences to the country of going on with the war, could not be induced to face the consequences to himself of making peace. And to make Shelburne's task harder still, a brilliant victory at sea—while not lessening the necessity for peace—had considerably abated the clamour for it, and raised expectation high as to the terms to be arranged.

Shelburne had no vices and no follies, and his only extravagance was the patronage of science and art. The first Lord Holland, by way of not "breaking his spirit," deliberately plunged his promising younger son into dissipation—Charles Fox was a confirmed gamester while yet a boy, a ruined gamester by the time he was a man. He continued these vices and follies when he was leader of Opposition in the Commons, and he hardly allowed the negotiations with North to interrupt them. For years past, every few months, his friends had seen "Charles' furniture" being seized for debt by some Hebrew creditor, and driven away along

St. James' Street, but his follies seem never to have struck his friends as disgraceful—they scarcely even winced at the faro bank.[1] All these things—and even political inconsistencies more serious still—have been accepted as the signs of an impulsive temperament —almost as further proofs of Fox's honesty. Shelburne's private character was unblemished, but Fox's admirers have eagerly swallowed the accusations of disappointed speculators, whose game Shelburne had spoiled. Every later writer, without exception, admits that there is no foundation for these accusations, but their admissions are half-hearted, because a too complete vindication of Shelburne is a condemnation of Fox.

Fox's aim, as everybody knew, was to reign supreme in a Cabinet with a figure-head. He resigned because Shelburne would not be that figure-head—and Fox's partisans shrieked at Shelburne's ambition. The two great sections of the Whigs, the Chathamites and the Rockinghamites, never loved each other; Fox fanned their divergencies into irreconcilable enemity, broke up the Whig Party, and put off reform in Parliament for fifty years—and all to crush Shelburne.

[1] "Hare opened the Pharo Bank in the great room, but had so few and such poor punters that Charles and Richard [Fitzpatrick] was obliged to sit down from time to time as decoy ducks. The Bank won, as Hare said, about a hundred, out of which the cards were to be paid. I do not think that the people who frequent Brooks's will suffer this pillage another campaign."—*Selwyn to Lord Carlisle*, November 30, 1781.

On the 16th of May, 1781, Selwyn had written to Carlisle: "I saw Charles to-day in a new hat, frock, waistcoat, shirt, and stockings; he was as clean and smug as a gentleman, and upon perceiving my surprise, he told me that it was from the Pharo Bank. . . . He was in such a sort of humour that I should have liked to have dined with him. His old clothes, I suppose, have been burned like the paupers' at Salt Hill." Very shortly after, however, fortune changed again. "You must know," writes Selwyn on May 29, "that for these two days past, all passengers in St. James' Street have been amused with seeing two carts at Charles' door filling, by the Jews, with his goods. . . . Such furniture I never saw. . . . And while this execution is going on in one part of the street, Charles, Richard and Hare are alternately holding a bank of £3000 ostensible, and by which they must have got among them near £2000." And again, on June 13: "The guinea deal is now deemed too much, so Charles has published a new edict, and they have only five guineas an hour, by which Lord Robert [Spencer?] cannot earn in a day more than Brooks gets by furnishing cards and candles." A few days later, Charles having told Selwyn that he had won £900, Selwyn hinted that he "had a suit to prefer. He guessed what it was, and begged that I would not just then speak to him about money. He was in the right. I meant to have dunned him for you." (Letter of June 19. From this letter we learn that the Emperor of Austria—then at Bruges—had told Selwyn, Fox had lately lost £8000. Fox said, "in two days, at various sports.")

It was another unfortunate circumstance for Shelburne that his brother-in-law, Colonel Fitzpatrick, was Fox's devoted friend, and Shelburne's virulent enemy. Shelburne was an irreproachable husband, but this did not prevent Fitzpatrick from forgetting common decency in his partisanship. Fitzpatrick played a far more important part in forming the Coalition than Burke did. Chatham was more happy in his connections —however fiercely his brothers-in-law might quarrel with him politically, they all loved him, and were all reconciled to him at last; and it was said of Temple that he died when Chatham died.

Where so fierce a clamour of party strife rages round a name, it is difficult to arrive at the truth, and from the nature of the accusations this is possible only indirectly. The only formulated charge against Shelburne is that of "duplicity." To the contemporaries of North, Shelburne did not appear straightforward! But Shelburne never made any secret of his opinions or intentions. In his speeches he seems to blazon them almost unnecessarily. On the great point of American Independence he never concealed his opinion—it was that of Chatham. He thought the prestige of Great Britain was lost if America was lost. But having become convinced that independence must be acknowledged, or the war must go on indefinitely, he told Franklin, that though he did not like independence, he would work for it loyally; and he must have done so, for he, and he alone, convinced George III that independence must be yielded.

The only other tangible accusation against Shelburne is in this very matter of his attitude towards the King. Shelburne thought he had discovered that if George III were treated with deference in small matters affecting his personal prerogative, he could be managed in great ones. And on the most important point of all Shelburne succeeded. He brought the King to do the thing he most abhorred—the thing he had spent millions, and the lives of thousands of his subjects, to avoid doing—the thing he had declared a hundred times that he would never do—rather would he abdicate —"they shall have another King." North never had the smallest influence over George III—it was the King who influenced North. North never had a policy, except the policy of carrying out the King's policy. Even when he believed it would be ruin, he carried it out—for five disastrous years. The case was reversed with Shelburne. If he tried to please the King, it was that he might carry out his own policy, not the King's. Shelburne is the only man who ever made George III do what he did not want to do.

And the thing that he wrung from a reluctant King was the salvation of this country.

It was North, not Shelburne, who should have been called "Malagrida"—North, who maintained himself for twelve years by evasions, tricks, deceptions, by raising a laugh, and giving a promise he never kept. North, whom Fox accused of "the most shuffling shuffle ever attempted in the most shuffling times"; whom Burke told that he "dealt in delusions"—they were "the daily traffic of his invention"; that he would hold out "a cheat" for a week to serve his turn—"a week?—for a day!—for an hour!" North, whose announcement of his own resignation was received as a trick to escape a vote of censure. North, who left it on record that for three years he had pursued a policy which he believed must end in ruin. It is the first trace of anything like a remonstrance on North's part. But though North confessed to the King that he was of the same opinion as Gower, he remained, and continued to carry out the policy for more than two years longer. When he entreats permission to resign, it is because the House grows more and more difficult to manage, as one military disaster after another shakes the courage of his supporters. Above all, it is because he dreads facing the Commons with another loan. When at last he does resign, it is not to save his country, but to save himself. He is resolved not to be the Minister to make peace—he knows that the Minister who does it will be more unpopular than the peace. The King's complaints of "desertion" are just. And though North's contemporaries did not know of his terrible confession, his speeches in parliament—so quibbling, so inept, so full of the flimsiest sophistries—must have told the dullest "ministerial" member that North had nothing to say for his policy except the one thing he dared not say—that it was the will of the King.

Walpole's "Character" of Lord Shelburne describes a psychological monstrosity. In his eagerness to make Shelburne appear hateful enough, Walpole forgets artistic consistency, and contradicts in one sentence what he has said in the next. "His falsehood was so constant and notorious, that it was rather his profession than his instrument"—like a "fictitious violin," hung out of a music-shop. "He was so well known that he could only deceive by speaking the truth." His plausibility was a habit, "his smiles were so excited that, like the rattle of the snake, they warned before he had time to bite. . . . He was so fond of insincerity, as if he had been the inventor."

Having enlarged sufficiently on Shelburne's insincerity, Walpole

goes on to paint him as the most transparent and clumsy villain who ever lived by lying. "With an unbounded ambition of governing mankind, he had never studied them. He had no receipt but indiscriminate flattery, which he addressed to all, without knowing how to adapt it to any particular person, for he neither understood the characters of men, nor penetrated them. . . . So ignorant was he of mankind, that he did not know how absurd it was in a man of such glaring ambition to affect having none . . . there was no industry and intrigue of which he was not suspected. . . . He not only had no principles, but was ready for any crime that suited his plans, which seemed drawn from the histories of the worst ages . . . he was a pedant in villainy. . . . A Catiline and a Borgia were his models in an age when half their wickedness would have suited his purpose better. . . . He determined to be Prime Minister by any means." But this blundering hypocrite with the rattlesnake smile did not always flatter, there were some whom he insulted, and he displayed the same *maladresse* in his choice of them. "The King hated him . . . he had offended and dreaded Lord Bute. He had treated Lord North with unpardonable contempt. He had wantonly on all occasions provoked Lord Mansfield. He had earlier broken with Rigby, and exasperated him lately. He had offended Charles Fox, Burke, and the Cavendishes to the highest degree." With such a trick of selecting the most powerful persons to quarrel with, we may accept Walpole's word that "both his heart and his face were brave; he feared neither danger nor detection." He was certainly the strangest of eminent liars, and it would seem that a brave heart need not resort to a rattlesnake smile.

The last sentences of Walpole's description must be charged with something worse than malice—they imply what Walpole must have known to be untrue. Shelburne, he says, had not "one friend of character but Lord Camden, for he heaped such impudent gratifications on Dunning and Barré that they were as justly abhorred for receiving the wages of corruption as he for conferring them." The services of Dunning, and the sacrifices of Barré, make these words as indecent as they are disingenuous. No single element of "corruption" was present. Barré's pension was a mere act of reparation. He would have had no need for a pension if he would have taken the wages of corruption—he and Dunning need not have waited till Rockingham returned to office. Neither George III nor Lord North was slow to take a hint that a man's opinions were undergoing a conscientious change. One by one many a once zealous member of Opposi-

tion had dropped such a hint, and never in vain. Some, like Wedderburn, had received the wages of corruption in the shape of a place and a peerage; others, like Rose Fuller, in that of a secret pension, earned by a gradual cooling of zeal—inexplicable to those who did not know that it was paid for. To provide for Barré's old age and blindness was the urgent duty of every Whig—that he was a Chathamite could not lessen this duty. Burke himself admitted that there was another reason still; and the debates of July 9 and 10 make it certain that the whole Cabinet approved of both pensions. And if the first suggestion did come from Shelburne, it must be owned that expectation of future support can hardly have been his motive—Barré old and worn, became totally blind next year—Dunning was dying of consumption, and did die that same year.

The only point worth considering in the affair is the truth or falsehood of Shelburne's assertion that Rockingham proposed the pension. Those who have seen in this presumptive evidence that Shelburne was a liar have surely not considered the facts. Burke's insinuations that Rockingham was not likely to have proposed a pension for a man who was not his own follower, is disposed of by Burke's other statement that Rockingham forgot to include Barré in a list of promotions sixteen years before, and "felt himself bound" in consequence. It was also totally untrue to speak of the pension as "hurried through" after Rockingham's death—as we see from Rockingham's memorandum, it was granted almost from the day he took office the second time. If something was not proposed for Barré by Rockingham, it is not to Rockingham's credit. Shelburne declared that Barré would have preferred a military post, and this was never challenged. A great deal has been made of Shelburne's not producing the Memorandum—a Memorandum written but three months before on so delicate a business as the formation of a Cabinet! But the chief shame of this abominable attack rests on Burke, who knew that Rockingham had a personal obligation to Barré, and yet refused to believe he would discharge it on behalf of a partisan of Shelburne—for this was his argument. It was a fitting prelude to the Coalition!

Against Walpole's impossible caricature, we may put the words of the third Lord Holland, who of all men had an interest, as Fox's adoring nephew, in blackening Lord Shelburne. "Of Lord Lansdowne," he begins, "how shall I speak? I had too many obligations to him, and retain too strong a sense of many estimable and some great qualities which he possessed, not to feel a pang in

recording his failings." Yet he cannot conceal them, for those objections to his character "formed in 1783 *the chief, perhaps the only justification of persons yet dearer to me.*" Lord Holland goes on to say that Shelburne was capable of strong attachments, "but too suspicious to feel, and too restless in his dealings with public men to inspire implicit confidence." "He had no knowledge of the world, but a thorough conviction of its dishonesty." "He had felt strongly, and thought deeply and intensely on many things. I have known few men whose maxims recur more frequently to my recollection, or are more applicable to the events of the world, and to the characters of those who rule it." A strange thing, surely, in a man who had no knowledge of the world. "Though there was, perhaps, not much candour, or justice, there was yet elevation in his character, and I have observed real magnanimity in his conduct. Title or emolument, without power or fame, never were his objects—he would have despised them." As to political views, Lord Holland remarks that "Bentham always said of him that 'he was the only minister he ever heard of who did not fear the people.' Indeed, he was from conviction sincerely averse to all commercial restraints, and all religious intolerance. . . . His mind seemed to be full and overflowing. . . . There was a force and character, if there was not real genius, in his oratory. . . . His chief merits were courage, decision of character, and discernment in discovering the talents of inferiors. . . . Want of judgment was his great defect. An imperious temper and suspicion, his ruling vices." In private, he was "munificent and friendly to a fault," and no member or connection of his family ever failed to find in him "a powerful protector, and active friend, in a difficulty." His affections were strong, and if not always steady, at least more lasting than his enmities. "He was a generous master, a hospitable man, a good parent." But—"he never liked or admired Mr. Fox."[1] Lord Holland could have added with truth that Lord Shelburne was sacrificed to Mr. Fox, in his life and after his death.

The first Marquis of Lansdowne was one of the most enlightened of English statesmen. Had he been in power in 1791 we should not have engaged in a war which at any rate seemed intended to restore absolute government in France. He was for free-trade, for Catholic Emancipation, for complete religious tolerance, for the education of the poor, and the making their lives less cruel. The condition of the rural poor shocked him, and

[1] *History of the Whigs*, i. 39–41.

he thought it was made worse by the very laws intended for their relief. He also thought it shocking that prisons are nurseries of vice instead of places of reform. To educate the poor he proposed to start some charity schools, and asked the Baptist minister of Calne to engage teachers—but the clergy opposed him; they thought the children would become Dissenters, though it was promised they should go to church with their parents.

He was for the rights of Ireland. In 1782, as Secretary of State, he moved in the Peers the repeal of the 6th George I—in gratitude for which poor Ireland voted £100,000 for additional seamen. Even after the Rebellion he was against the destruction of the Irish Parliament; and he implored Government to be sincere and straightforward in dealing with the Irish, "for they are a nation who pride themselves on a scrupulous regard for honour." So great was his disapproval of arbitrary government, that he believed all summary exercises of power did harm in the end, outweighing any temporary advantages, *even in reforms.* He thought that an oppressed country had better work out her own salvation; and even the horrors of the French Revolution could not drive him from his conviction that no nation has a right to interfere by force in the domestic affairs of another. In the panic legislation of 1795 he succeeded in modifying the worst parts of the Traitorous Correspondence Bill, and the Bill to make treason constructive. When Burke left the Whigs, and even Richmond swerved from his faith in universal suffrage, Lansdowne told an angry and frightened House of Peers, that though he trusted never to see anarchy or anything like anarchy in this country, "as little did he wish to see the country engaged in aiding the combination of Kings against subjects—the power of arms against the power of reason." And so Jeremy Bentham said of him that he was the only Minister he ever heard of who did not fear the people.

From first to last he was the enemy of war. He thought that Kings should be left to fight out their disputes single-handed, "without involving the people in their silly quarrels." The interests of Kings, he said, differed, "but those of all people throughout the world are but one interest if properly understood." He begged his friend Dr. Price to leave theological wrangles to the Doctors of Divinity and the Archbishops, and devote the rest of his life to "crying down war and preaching up peace."

When we consider that the whole course of English politics during that most momentous last quarter of the eighteenth century was determined by the refusal of the Rockingham Whigs to act

with Shelburne, and by the discredit they brought on their principles by their coalition with North, we must feel that few greater misfortunes ever happened to the cause of political and social progress in England, than the fall of Shelburne.

NOTE.—Of the great measures proposed by Pitt between his accession to power and the French Revolution, there is hardly one which had not its origin in the brief period when Shelburne was head of the Treasury. It was Shelburne who in 1780 (when in Opposition), and in 1782 (when in office), declared that the American and African trade must be opened to Ireland, and that Colonial produce must be allowed to be re-shipped from Ireland to Britain. If Pitt in 1785 introduced sweeping reforms in the public offices, it was Shelburne who originated the measure in 1782. The Sinking Fund was as much his idea as Pitt's or more. Pitt's Commercial Treaty with France in 1787 was only the idea Shelburne put forward in 1782. His old friend the Abbé Morellet wrote to him: "Vous m'apprenez la nouvelle du monde la plus interessante, en me disant que vos principes sur la liberté du commerce et de la communication des nations se répandent et s'accréditent parmi vos négociants et vos manufacturiers et jusque dans votre capitale, où l'esprit du monopole a été, je crois, plus dominant qu'en aucun autre lieu de l'Europe. Il m'est bien clair que ce progrès dans les lumières de votre nation est dû à vous même. M. Smith et quelquefois le Doyen Tucker chez vous les ont bien saisies ces vérités, mais ils n'ont fait que les mettre dans les livres et vous les avez mises dans le monde." —*To Shelburne*, July 9, 1785.

"Commerce, like other sciences, had simplified itself. There was no science that had not done so. A right reverend prelate had said that our commercial system required no alteration, which, with great submission, he thought could not be said of anything; and if the question were put to him, he believed he would not say it of the Church. . . . A great minister in Holland first opened the eyes of modern Europe upon commercial subjects. Men of letters in different countries contributed their aid to develop and extend the principles of free trade. . . . Those who argued that France was our natural enemy, and never could be otherwise, forgot that circumstances were entirely changed since the time of William III. England had no natural enemy, except the powers that kept 300,000 men under arms, maintained for the sake of conquests, and not for defence; they were the enemies of mankind, and merited that all Europe should join against them. He then proceeded to condemn the partition of Poland and the conduct of the Northern Powers."—*Speech of Lord Lansdowne on the French Treaty of* 1787. (Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne.*)

CHAPTER CXIX

THE SECOND NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE

"I have never known a peace made, even the most advantageous, that was not censured as inadequate, and the makers condemned as injudicious or corrupt. 'BLESSED are the peace-makers' is, I suppose, to be understood in the other world, for in this they are frequently *cursed.*"—*Franklin to John Adams*, Passy, Oct. 1781.

(Franklin himself did not escape censure from his countrymen.)

SHELBURNE did not lose a moment. As soon as Parliament was prorogued,[1] he hired the Thrales' Villa at Streatham, and gave his whole attention to the negotiations for peace. And first he sent his friend Benjamin Vaughan—Franklin's friend too—to assure Franklin that the change of Administration should bring no change of policy.

On the 9th of July, Franklin had given Oswald an outline of the terms—

1. Full and Complete Independence. All Troops withdrawn.
2. Settlement of the Boundaries of the Thirteen States.
3. The Boundaries of Canada to be what they were before the Quebec Act, or narrower still.

[1] A ludicrous incident occurred at the prorogation. The Jewel Office had been suppressed by Burke's Bill, and no arrangements had been made for the transfer of its duties in the removal or transportation of the "paraphernalia of the Crown." Who was to fetch the Crown and Sceptre? Application was made to the Lord Steward and Lord Chamberlain, to issue orders to the Keeper of the Tower, but there was no precedent, and they were afraid to act. At last, when there was danger that the King might have to prorogue Parliament without his crown, the Home Office issued the order. The next difficulty was how to carry it out. Five "stout agents of police" were sent for from Bow-street, and drove in two hackney-coaches to the Tower. By way of precaution, they took a circuitous route in returning—by the New Road, entering London again at Portland-street, and so to Westminster—the blinds of the coaches drawn down all the way. Eight or ten desperate fellows might have carried off the Regalia of England, far more easily than Blood did, for he had to get into the Tower, whereas now it could have been done in the New Road!—Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs*, iii. 189.

4. Freedom of fishing on the Newfoundland Banks, and elsewhere, for Fish and Whales.

These were the "necessary" conditions. "Advisable" were—

i. Indemnification to those ruined by the destruction of Towns.[1]

ii. Some sort of acknowledgment of the error of England in distressing the Colonies as she had done. ("A few words of that kind would do more good than people imagine.")

iii. The ships and trade of the States to have the same privileges in Britain and Ireland as British ships and trade.

iv. The Cession of Canada and Nova Scotia.

At the close of this interview, Franklin said nothing could be done for the Loyalists. He repeated that Congress had no power—the separate States had confiscated their estates. He even drew back from his hint that if Canada were ceded the back-lands might be granted to the Loyalists.

These terms were hardly sent off, when Oswald had to write to Shelburne that Grenville was imperilling the whole negotiation. When Fox resigned, Grenville resigned too, though Shelburne wished him to remain; and Mr. Fitzherbert, the English Minister in Brussels, was appointed in Grenville's place. Grenville was now spreading a report that Shelburne did not mean to grant Independence, and Franklin was demanding some express acknowledgment of Independence apart from the treaty, and refusing to discuss the business till this was done. In reply, Shelburne sent Oswald copies of his despatches of June 5th to General Carleton and Admiral Digby. Oswald was to tell Franklin that the Commission sent especially recognised Independence. Oswald was ordered to claim, as an act of justice, all debts to British subjects incurred before 1775, and again to demand the restoration of the Loyalists; he was to claim New York—still in our possession—as a possible means of obtaining this. An unreserved system of naturalisation was to be proposed, and Oswald was to do his utmost to prevent the States from making "any binding connection" with any other Power. Franklin said this Commission "would do."

And now another American Commissioner appears on the scene. For more than two years John Jay had been American Envoy to Madrid. Florida Blanca would never recognise him officially, but he tried to treat privately for the exclusive navigation of the

[1] "The whole might not exceed five or six hundred thousand pounds, and would conciliate the resentment of a number of poor sufferers, who else would keep up a secret spirit of revenge against Great Britain. To do it would infuse a universal conciliation."

Mississippi—an object which Blanca thought more important than Gibraltar. But the recovery of Gibraltar was the sole dream of the King of Spain. Charles III of Spain was a conscientious, haughty, suspicious, stubborn man; he had been dragged into war unwillingly, was piqued at being supposed the tool of France, and very angry with her for acknowledging American Independence, which he himself had steadily refused to do. Jay had long known what were the claims of Spain in America. He had dined with the French and Spanish Envoys when Gérard expatiated for two hours on the necessity of a "permanent line of separation" between Spanish and American possessions—hinting that if the Americans refused this, it would show they were as turbulent and ambitious as their English fathers. Gérard had almost convinced Jay that America had no right to the Floridas, and would not want the Mississippi "this age." Blanca's idea was to make the Gulf of Mexico a Spanish water; and in May 1781 Congress had ordered Jay not to insist upon the free navigation of the Mississippi below latitude 31° N.[1]

Jay's mission to Madrid had been full of anxieties and humiliations.[2] The capture of Mr. Laurens caused him the most distressing financial embarrassments; for the bills which Congress had drawn on Laurens (supposing him safe at The Hague) were presented to Jay, who could not meet them—he called them, bitterly, "drafts on the Bank of Hope." At last France honoured them, with a little help from Spain.

In April Franklin had sent for Jay, to come and assist in the negotiations for peace. Jay set out, leaving the great question of the Mississippi still unsettled, and arrived in Paris on the 23rd of June, worn out with the fatigues of the journey. He saw Franklin the same day, and de Vergennes the next; he met Grenville, and saw d'Aranda. Then he fell ill, and could do nothing for weeks. During his illness Rockingham died, and Shelburne became Minister.

[1] "Spain was growing very much afraid of America. She was very weak in her American colonies; she was hated as a ruler, and France owned she deserved hatred. The French would not have been sorry to see Great Britain recoup herself for the loss of North by the acquisition of South America. Florida Blanca gave up trying to capture Jamaica, 'that hated nest of contraband trade,' rather than spread the love of change—there were seeds of rebellion in Peru and Buenos Ayres."—BANCROFT.

[2] Jay said that the news of the fall of Charlestown came like "a frost on young leaves." His letters were intercepted, and when they came, they told him that the paper dollar was now worth one penny sterling, that his father's house had been broken into by the De Lancey Boys, and his sister-in-law had been wounded with a bayonet.

When Jay was able to attend to business, he brought to the council-table a strong distrust of France and Spain. At that interview with d'Aranda, the Spanish Minister had shown him a map with boundaries marked upon it, and had said that the conquest of West Florida gave Spain the Western Territory.[1] So now Jay demanded that before any treaty was made, America should be recognised as an Independent nation—by Act of Parliament, or, as Parliament was not sitting, by Proclamation, or by a Patent under the Great Seal. Till this was done, America was at the mercy of France and Spain, who might barter away American rights for concessions to themselves. Franklin and de Vergennes both agreed that Independence must be acknowledged in the first place; and de Vergennes refused to go farther in the matter till it was done. From the 11th to the 17th of August Oswald was going backwards and forwards between the Commissioners about this. The Americans said they wanted the treaty TO BE LASTING. Oswald asked what they meant. Jay replied that he would not give a farthing for any *Parchment Security*—"such are always broken when convenient." He meant a peace which it would not be to the interest of either to break. Oswald thought a Proclamation would be unconstitutional, and asked Jay whether he would be satisfied with a separate Clause in his Commission, independent of all the rest, recognising Independence. Jay consented—but the word "Colonies" must be altered—"We can't treat as colonies." Oswald wrote to Shelburne that the American Commissioners were determined to have "an equal footing with us, and take rank as parties to an agreement."

On the 10th of August Jay had left a marked map with de Vergennes. It gave a boundary east of the Mississippi, running from a lake on the borders of Georgia to the confluence of the Kanawha and the Ohio, and thence to Lake Erie. By this time Jay suspected de Vergennes of secretly prompting the British Cabinet to delay the acknowledgment of Independence, and of plotting meanwhile with Fitzherbert to exclude New England from the Fishery, and to keep the Valley of the Ohio. Jay was not far from the truth. De Vergennes was giving Gibraltar time to fall, and America time to admit the claims of Spain to the Mississippi, and of France to the Fisheries. The fact was that in 1779 great sacrifices had to be made to induce Spain to join in the war. Charles III cared no jot for American Independence—

[1] "Spain wants to coop us up within the Alleghany Mountains."—*Franklin to Livingston*, August 12, 1782.

all his desire was to keep the Americans from the Mississippi. He was heartily averse to independence, and angry with France for favouring it.

At last Oswald told the Commissioners that he was instructed to acknowledge Independence, if they would not treat otherwise. But the British Cabinet, like a child forced to swallow a black draught, tried every way of putting off the dreadful moment. They yielded minor points, they dropped the Debts—even the Loyalists—and when all would not do, they told Oswald that he *might*—if he MUST—offer for the King to "recommend" Parliament to enable him to acknowledge Independence, "absolutely and irrevocably, not depending on any other part of the treaty." But he was to exert his "greatest address" to get Independence merely as one of the articles. Perhaps the King thought that if the treaty were violated, Independence could even yet be recalled!

Even Jay now began, however, to believe in the *bona fides* of the British Cabinet, and he was all the more ready to meet it half-way because he had just received further proof of the designs of France and Spain, in the shape of a private "Alternative Memorandum," drawn up by Rayneval, de Vergennes' secretary, setting forth the nullity of American rights to the Valley of the Mississippi; and of a despatch from de Marbois,[1] French *chargé d'affaires* at Philadelphia, to de Vergennes, strongly condemning the pretensions of New England to share in the Newfoundland Fishery. Jay instantly sent Vaughan to England to warn Shelburne to beware of Rayneval, and to tell him it was the interest of Great Britain to end the Alliance between France and America. So great was Jay's dread of America's "great good friends," that he even offered to waive the demand for previous recognition, if Oswald's Commission, instead of calling the States THE COLONIES AND PLANTATIONS, would call them THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

On September 6th Rayneval sent Jay a paper with his "personal views." He expounded the startling theory that America's only claim to the western lands was under the rights of Great Britain. In 1775 Great Britain had admitted the claim of France to the Ohio; in 1761, 1763, and 1775, she had admitted that the lands west of the Alleghanies were Indian territory. He therefore suggested that all north of the Ohio should belong to England; and all south of latitude 31° N. to Spain. De Vergennes disowned all responsibility for this proposal, but the

[1] This letter was communicated to Jay by a secret agent of the British Government, "the secret service money of which was well expended."

Commissioners did not believe that his secretary would have made it (in writing, too!) without the Minister's knowledge and consent.

Immediately after this Rayneval went to England as de Vergennes' envoy, to confer with Lord Shelburne. He had many interviews with Shelburne and Grantham, and much was said on minor issues—among others, on Dunkirk. The Treaty of Utrecht forbade the fortification of Dunkirk; France now demanded the revocation of this clause. Shelburne told Reyneval he hoped he would not insist on restoring the fortifications—"English pride won't suffer a pistol pointed at the mouth of the Thames." They also discussed the coast of Africa. All went smoothly until India came up. Rayneval wanted the position before 1754—that is before the Company's great territorial gains of the Seven Years' War! Shelburne was firm. To "enfranchise" Dunkirk, cede what was asked for in Africa and Newfoundland, and permit the fortifying of Chandernagore, "was as much as any English Minister dare do." Nor would he agree to the Armed Neutrality. He said Russia had no business to interfere in West Europe—"she can't understand it any more than we can the affairs of the North." But he still believed that if Great Britain and France would unite their interests, they could become "arbiters of peace in Europe." There was "a time when a cannon-shot could not be fired in Europe without the consent of France and England, but now the Northern Powers try to act independently of us. In trying to hurt one another, we have hurt ourselves—let us unite, and we shall dictate terms to Europe." Shelburne also wished to destroy commercial monopoly, "an odious invention, though the English nation more than any other is tainted by it." Then he told Rayneval that former Ministers had never spoken to the King, except to tell him of his greatness and power, and that his resources were "infinite," and a short war would "destroy the power of France." He had been trying to get these ideas out of the King's head—hoped he had partly done so.

There was another hitch when the Spanish claims were considered. Here, Gibraltar was, as Shelburne said, "what it was in the sea—a rock." Rayneval told him that Gibraltar was as dear to the King of Spain as life itself. He suggested an exchange—perhaps Oran and Mazalquiver would be an equivalent. Shelburne said nothing less than Majorca, or large cessions in the West Indies. But far from giving up anything there, Spain hankered after Jamaica. At last Shelburne said Gibraltar was a *non possumus*—no English Minister would dare to give it up;

and at the final interview he warned Rayneval that if the war went on, he would leave no stone unturned to carry it on with vigour — he would seek alliances everywhere — he would offer territorial and commercial advantages to gain them—he would stir up a Continental war—"let the King of France reflect on the consequences." But Rayneval went away pleased with him. It was now that he told de Vergennes that Shelburne was "an honest man, with noble views and character, proud and determined, yet with most winning manners—he takes a broad view of affairs.[1] Nor is there an intriguer or doubtful character among his friends." Rayneval refused to believe that such a man was false or captious, "let his enemies say what they will."

Hitherto the American Commissioners had proceeded on the assumption that the protection of France was necessary against England, and that France was honestly endeavouring to get the best terms possible for America. Franklin therefore had acted on the principle that absolute confidence must be placed in de Vergennes. But with the entrance of Spain into the negotiations the situation changed. The grand object was no longer American Independence but the cession of Gibraltar—and perhaps of Jamaica. The Americans discovered that they were not being consulted. This was perhaps almost unavoidable, but de Vergennes ought to have told them frankly that the claims of Spain must be considered in the first place. He had committed another mistake. In June, 1782, Congress would probably have accepted the Ohio as the western boundary, but de Vergennes hesitated, hoping to obtain one still narrower. By now American ideas had enlarged; it was remembered that Virginia was reaching out to the Mississippi. Kentucky was forming. Gérard was mistaken in supposing that the States would not want the Mississippi "this age."

The Cabinet saw that a feud had sprung up between the Americans and their European allies, and that its own policy was to take advantage of it by granting America honourable terms. The Commissioners hinted that they need not wait for Spain. Oswald's Commission was altered to "THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES"; and on October 5—after a delay caused by Franklin's illness — negotiations were resumed. The verbal alteration was of enormous importance. As "Colonies," the States derived their right to the Fisheries and the western terri-

[1] Shelburne said to Rayneval that "monopoly in commerce was odious." Rayneval replied that de Vergennes also thought "freedom the soul of commerce."

tories solely by virtue of their charters — that is, by virtue of their connection with the Crown of England. The words, "the United States," turned a concession from the superior Power to its revolted subjects into "a territorial partition between equals."

Vaughan now became the chief go-between, and instead of American suspicion of England and reliance on France, the case was reversed, and both English and American negotiators became sincerely anxious for a speedy settlement. On September 26th, in the ante-room at Versailles, d'Aranda had made a last attempt to induce Jay to discuss a treaty with Spain, *without communicating his powers.* Jay had declined to enter into any informal negotiation. He would only treat on an equal footing—Spain must acknowledge Independence.

On the 5th of October Jay showed Oswald a plan of the Treaty. The First Article concerned Boundaries. The "north-west angle of Nova Scotia" was to be determined by the Treaty of 1763.[1] The other Articles provided for a perpetual peace, secured the right to the Fisheries (including the right to dry fish on the shores of Newfoundland), and established the Navigation of the Mississippi[2]—to which Jay added a clause for reciprocal freedom of commerce. Both Franklin and Jay refused to provide for the Debts before 1775, or for the Loyalists, and Oswald was instructed not to insist. Next day de Vergennes handed to Fitzherbert two Memorials. That of France demanded Sta. Lucia, Dominica, the Senegal and the Island of Goree, the French Factories in Bengal and Orissa, Pondicherry, Karikal, the Comptoir of Surat, the Northern Circars, Masulipatam, and the right to fortify Chandernagore—the restoration, in fact, of all that France had lost to the East India Company in the Seven Years' War. Besides this, she demanded the exclusive right of Fishing off Newfoundland, from Cape St. John to Pointe à la Lune, and one or two more islands, to be fortified and serve as a guarantee for their fishermen.

Spain's demands were higher still—she asked Minorca, Hon-

[1] The W. boundary of Nova Scotia was fixed in 1763 at the St. Croix river; a line was drawn due north from the source of the St. Croix to the S. boundary of Canada—all west of that line was Massachusetts, all E. was Nova Scotia. The point where the line touched the Canadian boundary was known as the north-west angle of Nova Scotia. But no accurate survey had ever been made, and Jay now proposed to make the river St. John the E. boundary, and parallel 45 N. the northern limit—as far as the Mississippi.

[2] "The Navigation of the Mississippi to be open from its source to the ocean, free and open for ever," and British and American ships to be on the same footing.

duras, Campeachy, and the "Musquito Coast"; all Florida, the Bahamas, the Isle of Providence, and GIBRALTAR—for which she offered Oran and Mazalquiver.

Fitzherbert told d'Aranda there was not the slightest chance of England consenting; but both Britain and America were now anxious to come to an agreement before France was ready with her terms, and France was delaying the formal demand because she too was waiting for news from Gibraltar. It was known that the great assault—preparing for months—was about to be made. But the same day that these enormous demands were handed in, news came to London that the great assault had been made—and had failed. General Eliott had destroyed the Spanish gun-boats; immediately afterwards Howe had relieved the garrison; the three years' siege was raised.

CHAPTER CXX

THE ASSAULT ON GIBRALTAR

"Our heaviest shells often rebounded from the tops of the battering-ships, and the 32-pound shot seemed to make no impression on their hulls."—DRINKWATER.

THE Duke of Grafton in his *Memoirs* tells the stratagem by which Howe was enabled to relieve Gibraltar. It gives a higher idea of Keppel's ability than any of his battles.

At a Cabinet meeting in September, Thurlow came in, and bluntly asked where was the man who could point out the means of saving Gibraltar? Keppel said he had a plan—on which Richmond warned him that the two transports laden with stores would not be ready to sail under a fortnight. Keppel replied that the wind, "now at west," would keep Lord Howe's fleet at Spithead from going down Channel, and the Dutch from coming out of harbour. "My plan is this—it only waits your concurrence —all is prepared." But first he was sorry to tell them that there was another service equally pressing—that was, to get the Baltic fleet safe back to our ports. The convoy of this fleet, having been informed of the force of the Dutch in the Texel, had put into Bergen for safety. "Lord Keppel plainly told us the King's yards were so destitute of naval stores, that our dependence for the means of continuing another campaign depended on the arrival of those ships—laden with all we wanted for the navy. He said he hoped to point out means to do both." His plan was a stratagem to divert the attention of the Dutch. That very night, orders should go to Lord Howe to detach Admiral Milbanke and fourteen ships of the line. "The Dutch, from good information, cannot muster more than 11 fit for sea;" and they are too wise to risk their fleet against one superior in numbers and size of ships. Orders shall go to Milbanke, that the instant the wind veers to east, he shall sail back and rejoin Howe, who, seeing the return of part of his fleet, will get under way and join him at sea. You need not fear the Dutch will come hastily out of port

on the disappearance of our ships—they will naturally conclude that we are blown into the Downs by easterly winds. This means a delay of at least forty-eight hours, during which every ship in the Baltic may get safe to some one of our ports—"for I purpose sending orders to the officers commanding the convoy at Bergen, the moment the wind sets to the east to run for the British port easiest to reach." The Council agreed at once. Keppel had two lords of the Admiralty waiting to sign instructions with Mr. Stephens—there was no time to tell anyone else, not even the King.

If the wind had come about too soon, the plan would have failed. But all went exactly right. The orders got to Bergen; the officer there had just time to obey; Milbanke did as ordered; the North Sea ships got home; Milbanke fell in with Howe again at the back of the Isle of Wight.[1]

The passage of the great convoy for Gibraltar was much impeded by contrary winds. At the entrance to the Straits they saw the whole combined fleet drawn up near the Spanish coast. The weather had been tempestuous, and several Spanish ships had gone ashore. On the 11th, in the morning, Howe entered the Bay, to find the garrison flushed with triumph, the Spanish works in ruins, and the camp of the besiegers preparing to break up.

Ever since France had lent her aid, the siege had been pressed in a different fashion.

On March 1, 1782, came news that Fort St. Philip in Minorca had surrendered to the Duc de Crillon on the 5th of February; and on the 11th of April "a Faro boat" brought private letters from Lisbon to warn the garrison that great preparations were being made at Cadiz for a determined attack on Gibraltar — 20,000 men were coming; and de Crillon was to command, and the chief attack would be made by sea. It was added that ships were to be fitted up in a very peculiar manner.

Soon the garrison saw the enemy very busy about their ships at Algeciras—opening new port-holes in ships' sides, and strengthening the sides with some material that looked like junk. At last it dawned on the garrison that these were to be battering ships. The *Vernon* had run the blockade, and brought the 97th, but that regiment soon became so sickly as to be of little use before September. On May 13th, three

[1] *Memoirs* of the Duke of Grafton.

more ships from England brought a great store of powder and shells; but now hardly a day passed without vessels of all sorts arriving off the enemy's camp, with materials for the siege. And though the fire was comparatively slack, it sometimes did dreadful damage—as when on June 11 a shell fell through the "splinter-proof," and blew up the magazine at Princess Anne's Battery (Willis'). The explosion killed several men, and shook the whole rock, throwing débris an "almost incredible way into the sea." As the great column of smoke rose from Willis' the Spaniards in their lines shouted for joy.

On the 26th a great fleet of more than a hundred sail appeared from the east and entered the Bay. Most of the ships had troops on board, and in the course of the next three days they landed, as the garrison computed, about twelve battalions of 750 men each. These were encamped in the rear of the second line. June passed in constant alarms, and constant activity on the part of the enemy. On the 18th a great French convoy appeared from the east — also with troops. It was a detachment from the force which had taken Minorca—about 5000 men. And on the 31st, from movements in the camp, the garrison felt sure that de Crillon had arrived to take the command. Meanwhile their friends in Lisbon had let them know that it was believed in Spain Gibraltar must fall before the end of May.

De Crillon knew the ground well. He had with him "Mons. d'Arçon," a great engineer, and Admiral Moreno. The battering ships were d'Arçon's idea — he thought they could be made impregnable and incombustible. Moreno had helped take Minorca. General Eliott with his little force now had to face the combined forces of France and Spain. He left nothing undone. He made the garrison practise parapet-firing at casks in the Bay; he tried different kinds of projectiles; he made subterranean passages. Above all, he got ready his forges for the red-hot shot.

By the beginning of July the enemy had ten battering ships ready, and every night they raised their fascines higher. They had thrown a boom of spars from the breakers north of the island at Algeciras towards the north; the gun-boats were ranged in front of this, and there was another boom from the island to the mainland.

On the 15th Eliott astonished the enemy. He had made a gallery above Farringdon's Battery, and this day he opened an embrasure in the face of the rock. The mine was unusually

loaded, and the explosion was so loud that almost the whole camp turned out to see what it was, and saw smoke coming out of the Rock itself.

More private letters came, with warnings about the battering ships and the vast preparations, and how the Count d'Artois, brother to the King of France, was coming to see Gibraltar fall. And on the 25th of July a cutter brought news that last April Rodney had totally defeated the French fleet in the West Indies, and taken the great ship, the *Ville de Paris*, with de Grasse himself on board.

In August a curious malady, "a species of influenza,"[1] made its appearance on the frigates, and soon spread to the garrison. For several days a hundred men a day were taken to the hospital, "but bleeding and a night's rest usually removed it." The garrison had good reason to hope that the enemy were suffering as much as themselves.

On the 10th, at daybreak, they were astonished to discover that during the night the enemy had raised a great "epaulment,"[2] 500 yards long, connecting the parallel to the eastern breach by a communication nearly 1300 yards long. It seemed as though 10,000 men at least must have been at work to do it in the time! And it was done within 800 yards of a garrison constantly on the alert, but was not discovered till finished. The enemy's works now embraced both shores of the isthmus. More and more casks, pickets, and fascines were brought, and three other epaulments were erected, "with retiring flanks of sand-bags," for mortar batteries.

On the 18th the garrison had reason to believe that some very great person—probably the Count d'Artois himself—had arrived in camp. Salutes were fired; barges with crimson awnings were passing from Algeciras to the Orange Grove, and all the flags were flying. Next day a flag of truce brought an exceedingly polite letter from de Crillon to the Governor, informing him that His Royal Highness the Comte d'Artois, just arrived in camp, had been pleased, in passing through Madrid, to take charge of some letters for the garrison, and now desired the Duke to transmit them, and to add "the

[1] Influenza was universal over Europe at this time.

[2] "The epaulment appeared to be raised entirely with sand-bags from ten to twelve feet high, with a thickness proportionable, and was altogether a most stupendous work. The Spanish *Gazette* described this parallel as 230 toises in length, and said that 1,600,000 sand-bags were used. A toise is 6 feet."—DRINKWATER.

strongest expressions of esteem for your person and character." De Crillon expressed his great satisfaction at conveying this message, as it gave him the opportunity he had been looking for "these two months that I have been in camp, to assure you of the highest esteem I have conceived for your Excellency," and the pleasure with which he looked forward to becoming his friend, when he had rendered himself worthy of that honour by facing him as an enemy. Meanwhile, he begged to offer "a few trifles for your table, of which I am sure you must stand in need, as I know you live entirely upon vegetables"—should be glad to know which you like best. "I shall add a few head of game for the gentlemen of your household, and some ice." The Governor replied with equal politeness, congratulating the Princes on having "such a master in the art of war" as de Crillon. He expressed himself as overwhelmed by his Royal Highness' condescension in permitting the letters to be conveyed in his carriages. Also returned a thousand thanks for his Excellency's handsome present, though in accepting he broke through a resolution he had faithfully adhered to since the beginning of the war—never to procure or receive, by any means whatever, anything for his own private use—"so that everything is sold publicly here, and the private soldier, if he have money, can become a purchaser as well as the Governor. I make it a point of honour to partake both of plenty and scarcity in common with the lowest of my brave fellow-soldiers." He therefore entreated his Excellency not to heap any more favours of this kind upon him, as in future he could not convert them to his private use. And as a hint that the garrison was not in such straits as de Crillon imagined, Eliott added that though at this season vegetables were scarce, every man had a little garden and raised what he could—"the English are naturally fond of gardening," and we find our rest and amusement in it. Then he thanked the Duke for the offer of his friendship, and hoped to avail himself of so precious a treasure, at proper time and place. After which these two gallant commanders set to work to fight each other in earnest.

The Duke seemed determined to astonish the garrison by the rapidity with which he raised his batteries. There were explosions, fires, cannonades—and then on the 22nd of August an ominous silence, and deserters coming in said the batteries were about to open. And all the while the great epaulment

was growing longer and longer, till the garrison could count 64 embrasures.

Every deserter told them the assault was nearly ready. The battering ships were anchoring off Barcelo's Battery, and a great number of boats were ranged along the shore at Algeciras. On the 28th six Spanish ships of the line came through the Straits. That day two 24-pounders were got up the hill to the gallery above Farringdon's. Six hundred men were working at Willis'. That night a deserter told them the 15th of September was to be the day.

In camp, more strings of mules, more fascines, more epaulments, more merlons; more men-of-war coming in from the west, more soldiers going aboard them, more bodies of troops seen marching, more floating batteries being towed out. And in the garrison, men working night and day at the defences, and Governor Eliott distributing coals to the grates and furnaces for heating the red-hot shot. And now the deserters say the 8th of September is the day.

The besiegers were working too hard. Once more, in their zeal to make, they forgot to defend.[1] They were almost in the same state as a year ago, before the sortie, when on the morning of September 6, General Boyd, the Lieutenant-Governor, wrote to Eliott advising the immediate use of red-hot shot against the land batteries. Eliott at once consented, and placed the attack under Boyd's orders.

By the morning of the 8th Boyd was ready, and at 7 o'clock the firing began from all the northern batteries which bore on the parallel. It went on all day, and the effect surpassed the most sanguine expectations. In a few hours the red-hot shot set on fire the Mahon Battery, and great part of the adjoining parallel, and, in spite of all efforts to extinguish the flames, by night the whole of these works was consumed; and the San Carlos and San Martino Batteries, though not burned as before, were so damaged that the greater part had to be taken down.

For nearly an hour the besiegers were silent, though "they performed prodigies of valour" in attempting to extinguish the flames. After ten o'clock they returned the fire, but by four in

[1] De Crillon's cannon were 26-pounders. The heavy Spanish guns were now distributed on the sea-line, in room of smaller ordnance mounted in the batteries. "By this disposition the Duke would not have it in his power to return any of the shot we fired, as his cannon were all 26-pounders; and the governor was enabled to retaliate on their shipping those shot which he had received from the land." —DRINKWATER. It was not the first time that the Spaniards had found the disadvantages of weight as opposed to quickness.

the afternoon the cannonade ceased on both sides. It became evident that the assault was to be delivered.

At half-past five on the morning of the 9th de Crillon opened his batteries, unfinished as they were. One hundred and seventy pieces of ordnance, all of large calibre, discharged shot and shell against the British works. Sometimes there were from ten to twenty shells in the air at once. But they did less harm than might have been expected, though it was "exceedingly warm" on the northern front, and the lines at Lanport were greatly annoyed by the howitzers. Nine line-of-battle ships, Spanish and French, got under way from the Orange Grove, and poured in broadsides as they passed to Europa Point—then, suddenly wearing, they returned, firing again as they went. Gun-boats also approached the town, but the King's Bastion gave them a warm reception. The garrison was thus annoyed from all sides—which the deserters had told them was d'Arçon's plan.

The sea-attack must be stopped somehow. Eliott heated the furnaces at the New Mole. Towards dusk the enemy's fire abated, but there were more shells than ever, and very early on the morning of the 10th the ships repeated their attack. But the very first red-hot shot they discovered on board sent them back in haste to the Orange Grove. At 7 o'clock on the 10th the besiegers had fired 5527 shots and 2302 shells, besides those fired by the ships and boats. But the garrison troubled themselves very little to return the fire—their attention was concentrated on the works.

On the afternoon of the 11th they thought they would soon be attacked by the battering ships. Several detachments of troops had embarked, others could be seen standing on the neighbouring eminences; signals were being shown, and the wind was favourable. Eliott doubled his guards and lighted his furnaces. It was thought the ships would advance in the night, to open with greater effect at daybreak; but the attention of the garrison was called off to the land-side, where the besiegers had set fire to the barriers at Forbes'—all the pallisades were in flames, down to the water's edge, and by the light of the fire several parties of the enemy were seen in the meadows. The garrison had hardly recovered from this alarm when the gun-boats began to bombard the north front. Through all this our loss was trifling.

At eight on the morning of the 12th a large fleet was reported from the west. The wind was so brisk that before the garrison could conjecture who they were, they were in the Bay — the combined fleets of France and Spain, 38 ships of war, with frigates, "xebeques, bomb-ketches," and hospital-ships, under ten

Admirals and a broad pendant. By the afternoon they were all at anchor off Orange Grove. It was probably a greater armament than had ever been brought against a fortress. With the ships already there, the combined fleets now counted 47 sail of the line, "innumerable" frigates, xebeques, cutters, gun and mortar-boats, and the ten battering ships with their 212 guns. On the land-side, there were "most stupendous and strong batteries," with 200 pieces of heavy ordnance, and an army of 40,000 men, commanded by a victorious general, of high reputation, and animated by the presence of two princes of the blood-royal of France. No wonder that in the Spanish lines it was thought "criminal to whisper a doubt of success."

But this mighty host fell into the common error of underrating the enemy. It is true the garrison was only about 7000 effectives, including the marines—but they were veterans, long hardened to bombardment, and commanded by officers as able and resolute as ever defended a post — and such a post as the Rock of Gibraltar!

Now there happened a sign like those which of old heartened Roman armies with assurance of victory. Just as the combined fleets entered the Bay of Algeciras, and the soldiers in town were watching, hoping that the British fleet might be in pursuit, what they took to be a flag for a fleet was suddenly hoisted on the signal-pole. With loud huzzas all cried that the British Admiral was certainly in sight. But the signal disappeared, and soon they learned that it was no flag, but an eagle, which, after whirling round the flag-staff, had alighted on it, and then flown away to the east.

On the morning of the 12th all the ships seemed to be assembled off the Orange Grove. A little before seven the battering ships got under way, and it seemed the moment was come. The grates and furnaces were lighted again.

The ten battering ships began to bear down for their several stations, "in admirable order," "in a masterly manner," till the nearest were about 900 yards off the King's Bastion, and the most distant, 11 or 1200. The garrison waited till the first ship dropped her anchor—about a quarter before ten—and then began their fire. The enemy were all moored in ten minutes, and then there was a terrific cannonade. More than 400 pieces of the heaviest artillery were playing on the besieged. The battering ships seemed to answer d'Arçon's expectation—the heaviest shells often rebounded from their tops, and 32-pounders made no visible impression on their hulls. The garrison often "flattered them-

selves" that they were on fire, but no sooner did any smoke appear than men were seen "with the most persevering intrepidity" pouring water on the place. Even the artillery officers began to lose their confidence in the red-hot shot.

This began to be used at noon,[1] about which time the enemy got the range — till now they had fired too high. Casualties began to be numerous, especially in the batteries north of the King's Bastion. But the artillery-men concentrated their fire on the ships, disregarding the land-bombardment. Showers of "hot balls, carcasses, and shells of every species" flew from all quarters, the masts of ships were shot away, the rigging of all was "in great confusion." The wind changed, and kept back the mortar-boats which were trying to second the ships, but this also hindered our own gun-boats from flanking the battering ships to southward. For hours this tremendous fire went on, and neither side seemed to obtain the advantage. "The wonderful construction of the ships seemed to bid defiance to the powers of the heaviest ordnance."

But in the afternoon things began to change. The smoke on board the flagship was evidently beyond the power of water to quench it. Confusion was now apparent on all the ships, and by evening their cannonade was considerably abated. By seven or eight o'clock it had almost ceased. As night came on, rockets were thrown up—the garrison afterwards learned as signals of distress. Several ships were disabled. "An indistinct clamour, with lamentable cries and groans, proceeded from all quarters," and a little before midnight a wreck floated in under the town-wall. The twelve men on her were all that remained of threescore. Not knowing what to-morrow might bring forth, Eliott ordered the troops to rest.

D'Arçon had been almost too ingenious. He had said of his batteries, "They are incombustible and insubmergible," and he had almost succeeded in making them so. But he had paid too dear for his success.[2] By a complicated arrangement of pumps and some spongy substance, he made water circulate through his constructions, as the blood does through the veins of a human body, and this kept them so saturated that even the red-hot shot could

[1] "As the furnaces were too few, wood fires were kindled in the corners of the nearest buildings, and the shot thrown in was soon red-hot. The men called them roasted potatoes.'"—DRINKWATER.

[2] There was considerable friction between the French and Spanish commanders—de Crillon was not civil to Moreno, and had jeered at d'Arçon's batteries. Now poor d'Arçon was in despair. "I have burned the Temple of Ephesus—everything is lost, and through my fault."

not set them on fire. Unfortunately it saturated them only too thoroughly—so much water got in that there was danger of the powder being wetted. So the irrigation had to be hurriedly stopped—and the crews had to do the best they could by sprinkling. And now the red-hot balls began to tell, the fire got hold, until, in a fright lest they should be blown up, they flooded their powder.

An hour after midnight the worst-injured battering ship was in flames, and by two in the morning was ablaze from stem to stern. The ship next her to southward was also on fire. The light thus thrown enabled the gunners to point their guns with the utmost precision, and between three and four, six other battering ships were on fire. Brigadier Curtis, commanding the marine brigade at Europa Point, seeing this, marched about 3 o'clock with a detachment to the New Mole, and drove the boats from the battering ships. Towards dawn he captured two launches full of men. Then, hearing that many had been left on board the ships, he tried to rescue them. Some resisted—they had been told they would be put to the sword if taken; but on reflection they called to Curtis to come back and take them off. Meanwhile the flames had reached the magazine of another of the battering ships, and about five she blew up with a dreadful explosion—débris falling dangerously near our gun-boats. Curtis saved over 350 in all; but many perished, and terrible scenes were witnessed. Of the six ships, three blew up before 11 o'clock, and three burned to the water's edge. Of the other two, one blew up, and the other was burnt that she might not be retaken.

The loss sustained by the besiegers was never known—the garrison thought it could not be less than 2000. The casualties of the defenders were so few as to appear almost incredible.[1] The distance of the battering ships "was exactly such as our artillery could have wished." It required so small an elevation that almost every shot took effect, and the damage to our works bore no proportion to the violence of the attack. Before night all our sea-line batteries were in working order again. The garrison expected an assault by land—they afterwards learned that it was contemplated, but that de Crillon overruled it as too hazardous.

A cannonade was kept up, more or less, till the 9th of October

[1] "Within the fortress the city was almost entirely destroyed; scarce a house habitable, and such as were left standing were pierced by shot and shell. But, beyond this dilapidation, the effects of the fire were not remarkable, the batteries were still in serviceable condition, and the loss of life was singularly insignificant."—Captain Sayer, *History of the Siege.*

—with several alarms from the land. On the night of the 10th a hurricane did great damage to the combined fleets, which were lying at single anchor, as they had been warned of the approach of Admiral Howe. The garrison heard this too—with great joy; but their joy was damped when they learned his great inferiority—thirty-four to oppose forty-two, and the navigation of the Straits so precarious, that once inside, Howe might not be able to return for some time. About sunset the van of the British fleet was discovered "through the haze" in the Straits. By what Howe called "want of timely attention to the circumstances of the navigation," most of the transports were carried past the fortress into the Mediterranean. The combined fleets followed Howe, but avoided an action. The transports got into the Bay, and on the 18th Lord Mulgrave landed the 1600 troops of the reinforcement. Next day the British fleet stood away to the westward, followed at some distance by the French. On the 21st most of the tents in the French camp were struck, and all the deserters said the camp was breaking up. Soon a flag of truce told the garrison that a general peace was expected. Little care was taken to keep up the blockade, and on December 17, 1782, came news that a general peace was on the point of being signed. There was still a cannonade, with alarms, and the enemy were working at the mines by the Devil's Tower. But the great siege was over.

CHAPTER CXXI

JAY AND ADAMS

"We never can be such sots," says he, "as to think of differing again with you." "Why," says I, "in truth I have never been able to comprehend the reason why you ever thought of differing with us thus far."—*Adams' Account of his Conversation with Oswald*, Nov. 18, 1782.

"I wish to bring the two nations [England and France] to cordiality. Not only are they not natural enemies, but they have interests which ought to bring them nearer together. We have each lost consideration in our furious desire to do each other harm. . . . Let us re-unite, and we shall stop all revolutions in Europe."—*Shelburne to Rayneval*, in 1782. (By "revolutions" he meant the further division of Poland, the encroachments on Turkey, and the attempt of Austria to bring Italy under her control by seizing the harbours of Dalmatia.)

THE Cabinet at once resolved to resist the demands of France and Spain in the West Indies, to withdraw from any consideration of ceding Gibraltar, and to try to modify the American terms in favour of British creditors and American Loyalists. They were now sure that America would not continue the war for the sake of Spanish interests. To strengthen Oswald they sent over Henry Strachey—formerly Secretary to Clive, then to Lord Howe's Commission, and now Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He was to urge the claim of England (under the Proclamation of 1763) to the lands between the Mississippi and the western boundary of the United States, and to try to extend the limits of Canada—the great object being to get something for the Loyalists. If possible, Maine was to be tacked on to Nova Scotia for them. But if he could not get this, then he must accept their terms—all but the right to dry fish; they must only have what they had before—"a drift fishery," for Administration has no power to alter the Navigation Act.

Shelburne wanted to have done with these negotiations in a foreign capital, under the eye of our enemies. One of his few consolations was that the negotiations had not given rise to speculations in the Funds; numbers were on the watch, but such secrecy was observed that speculators could obtain no useful information.

The effect of the great victory at Gibraltar was soon felt—France withdrew her claims to the Circars and Masulipatam, and even seemed disinclined to support the excessive demands of Spain.[1] De Vergennes said Spain asked for her goods ten times what they were worth. But Madrid stood firm; so then de Vergennes changed his tone, and said peace could not be made without the cession of Gibraltar. D'Aranda, pressed by Fitzherbert to say what Spain would give for it, replied, "Anything but one of the limbs of Spain"—by which he meant except Porto Rico, on which George III had set his heart.

Strange as it must appear, the King was "in no manner opposed" on principle to the cession of Gibraltar. This was by no means the first time that an exchange had been proposed. The Power which holds Gibraltar commands the right of way into the Mediterranean; and Spain, who had allowed the Rock to be stormed so easily in 1704, had never reconciled herself to its loss. There had been many offers on our part to restore it, but our price was too high. George I would have given it back to Philip V, if he would join the Quadruple Alliance—at once. It was one of the twelve Secret Articles that Stanhope took to Madrid in 1718. In 1757, Pitt offered it for Minorca, and satisfaction for the complaints about the Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras.[2]

In 1779 it seems to have struck Commodore Johnstone—then appointed to the Lisbon Station, for his services in America—that we might get rid of one of our enemies by restoring Gibraltar. Quite unauthorised, he hinted to somebody that Lord North might perhaps be induced to purchase the friendship of Spain this way. So Florida Blanca got Charles III to make a direct, though secret offer, through the Abbé Hussey, an Irishman, his Chaplain. Hussey made it known to a spy employed by both Courts, and the spy communicated it to Richard Cumberland,[3] Lord George Germaine's private secretary. Spain offered to withdraw from the French Alliance, and pay besides in ships, treasure, and territory; and for a moment it seemed possible that America might find

[1] The news of the repulse at Gibraltar increased the clamour for peace in Paris. France was beginning to tire of Spain as an ally, and de Vergennes was willing to make great sacrifices (and to require them from America) in order to get out of his obligations to Spain. Franklin, on his part, felt that America owed little gratitude to Spain, who had helped unwillingly, and had taken four years to think about acknowledging her Independence.

[2] See his letter to Sir Benjamin Keene, "most secret and confidential," of August 23, 1757. In this letter he calls the Treaty of Utrecht "the indelible reproach of the last generation."

[3] The dramatist.

Spain turned against her. Germaine, with George III's consent, wrote Hussey a letter, to be shown, promising "most friendly attention." Florida Blanca offered large pecuniary allowances for all stores, privileges in trade, cessions of territory, and "accommodation with respect to America." Four Cabinet Councils met on the business, and Conditions were drawn up. They were—

1. Spain to give the island of Porto Rico. 2. The fortresses of Omoa and its territory. 3. A harbour, and territory for a fort, in some bay near Oran. 4. Spain to buy at the full price all stores and artillery left in Gibraltar, and pay 2 millions sterling as indemnification for the sums expended by us on fortifications since we took Gibraltar. 5. A separate peace with Great Britain (which Florida Blanca said Spain could make); and the renewal of the Treaty of Paris, except as affected by these proposals. 6. An engagement not to help America, not to allow any American ship to enter any port of the Spanish dominions; and to help Great Britain to reduce America—or, if this last cannot be, at least to compel all rebels to depart from her territory within a week. We to do the same by the King of Spain's rebels. 7. A cessation of arms. But the cession of Gibraltar not to take place till the rebellion in America is ended.

These conditions were imparted to Hussey at Hillsborough's house. Stormont was present, and appears to have been very disagreeable in his manner to Hussey[1]—(Stormont would seem to have been the least fitted for an Ambassador or intermediary of all men ever selected for such an office). Everything was done to make the proposal unofficial—Johnstone was disowned as "only a cruising Captain," and Hussey was forbidden to say a syllable that would excite hopes of the cession, until he felt he had been brought from Madrid to be made a fool of—almost to make a fool of his Master the King. In his anger he told Cumberland that Florida Blanca had always warned him that "insincerity pervaded the ruling councils of Great Britain." Finally, he was allowed to write that we would treat on the basis of the Treaty of Paris, "and then Spain may start the subject under the title of Change of Territory."

Meanwhile Rodney defeated and captured Admiral Langara, and relieved Gibraltar. Our ardour for peace visibly cooled. In 1780 Cumberland was sent to Spain, to reopen a negotiation—but then came the Gordon Riots, reported in Spain as a rebellion; and Florida Blanca did not care to treat with a Government which he supposed might be swept away to-morrow. After the capture of the East and West India convoys, the attempt was again renewed.

[1] "He grated him severely."

At one interview, Blanca exclaimed with extreme passion—dashing a paper to the ground and trampling on it as he spoke—"Gibraltar is an object for which the King my Master will break the Family Compact, and every other engagement with France!" Perhaps France was moved by an inkling of this to afford more active help to Spain—d'Estaing, it was soon rumoured, was about to sail for Gibraltar, and de Crillon was actually sent with an army, and very early in February, 1781, these negotiations were broken off, and the siege was pressed with vigour.

And now the Dutch Plenipotentiaries, Berkenroode and Brantson, arrived in Paris, and announced that they were instructed to insist on the principles laid down by Mr. Fox in his despatch to M. Simolin, on the Armed Neutrality. Fitzherbert thought they took a very dictatorial tone—they demanded restitution of all conquests, and compensation for captured vessels. He replied that Fox's offer was null and void, as Holland had rejected the overture for peace which it contained.

Rayneval came over again, and proposed that Gibraltar should be exchanged for Dominica and Guadaloupe, giving Gibraltar to France, who would then arrange an exchange with Spain. But Shelburne refused—negotiations cannot drag on for ever—it must be peace or war. He had got Parliament prorogued from November 26 to December 5, hoping to prevent speculation in the Funds, by letting nothing be known till all could be known. The stock-jobbers were always passing between London and Paris, disseminating false news, and they revenged themselves on the Minister by spreading reports that he was himself speculating.

Strachey reached Paris during the last days of October. He brought instructions about the boundaries of Canada (to be French, not Spanish[1]), and the western lands—all with a view to getting compensation for the Loyalists. He was only to grant "a drift fishery," to omit the clause for a free commerce, and to insist on the Debts.

The question of the Fisheries—so vital to New England—now came to the front. The man who knew most about the Fishery claims and the boundaries of Massachusetts was hurrying to Paris, summoned by Jay. John Adams reached Paris on October 26—a day or two after Strachey—and found Franklin very imperfectly recovered from his severe fit of gout, and Jay's health far from re-established. But they all, including Strachey, met on the

[1] De Vergennes did not want America too strong, and kindly pointed out to Shelburne that Canada once included Oswego and Niagara. He hoped Britain would keep all beyond the Alleghanies.

27th at Franklin's house at Passy. That evening Adams told Franklin that he meant to support Jay's views as to the policy of the French Court. Adams may be said to have been anti-French. He considered the letter of de Marbois a proof of French double-dealing; Franklin—who could never forget all that America owed to France—thought it unfair to attribute de Marbois' opinions to de Vergennes. He always said that de Vergennes had never deceived *him*. Now, he heard Adams patiently, but said nothing. But at the first conference afterwards he turned to Jay, and told him he would go on with the business "without consulting this Court." Nothing in the course of these negotiations is more astonishing than the way in which these three men, so different, so differing, managed to beat out so satisfactory a peace, and remain united.

The first thing Adams did was to suggest that the questions of the Debts and the Loyalists should be separated.[1] This happy suggestion was agreed to—all just debts should be paid. And on the 30th and 31st of October, the North-east Boundary was discussed. The English Commissioners tried hard for Maine—or at least the Penobscot and Kennebec;[2] but Adams convinced even Strachey, by exhibiting the official documents of Royal Governors, and the boundary was agreed to be at the river St. Croix.[3] There was again much discussion on the Loyalists, and Adams, like Franklin, said that each State must decide on its own account—and would in all probability decide against them.

On November 2 the Fisheries were discussed. The Americans gave up the right to dry fish on Newfoundland, on condition that they might do it on the unsettled parts of Nova Scotia. Next day Strachey made another effort for the Loyalists, but Franklin threatened to send in a claim for damages done and depredations committed by the British army. All he would consent to was to recommend Congress to recommend the Loyalists to their respective States. The Commissioners were together the whole of the 4th November drawing up the articles respecting the Debts, the Tories, and the Fishery. Adams drafted the last himself. To

[1] Vaughan asked for a statement of what the Tories had done, in case it was necessary to run them down, but Adams refused—he said he pitied them too much to add to their sufferings. He did, however, suggest reprinting the Letters of Bernard and Hutchinson, and the story of Wyoming, as given in the *Annual Register* for 1778–9, and of the prison-ships and churches at New York, and the burning of towns.

[2] By this America gave up the triangle of land between Huron, Ontario, and Erie.

[3] By Jay's Treaty of 1794 this was decided to mean the Schoodie.

Strachey's final appeal for the Loyalists, the Commissioners replied that they would be sorry if the impossibility of America complying should induce Great Britain to continue the war for the sake of those who caused and prolonged it.

On the 5th of November Strachey went to England with a copy of the Articles, and a marked map.[1] While he was gone, Adams waited on de Vergennes for the first time, and showed him the official record of Governor Pownall's solemn act of burying a leaden plate, in 1759, on the east side of the river Penobscot, three miles above the place where navigation ends. The plate bore an inscription stating that this was the province of Massachusetts Bay. He also showed de Vergennes all the other records, and told him that the grant of James I to Sir William Alexander made the St. Croix the boundary, and that four Royal Governors of Massachusetts had favoured the claim.[2] De Vergennes observed that Mr. Fitzherbert had told him Great Britain wanted the land for masts.[3] "Not masts," said Adams—"tories!" De Vergennes said all precedent was in favour of re-establishing in their possessions those who had adhered to the old Government. Adams replied that in Ireland there had been many confiscations without restitution! And as for the British people being in honour bound to the Loyalists—the Loyalists had deceived them into this war—had brought an indelible stain on the name of England, and now asked the Americans to compensate their destroyers! Rayneval acknowledged the force of this argument.

Time pressed more and more. Shelburne's Cabinet was tottering. A coalition against him of North, Fox, and Portland was talked of.[4] On the 19th of November, when Jay and Adams dined at Versailles with de Vergennes and all the foreign

[1] This map is now in the King's Library in the British Museum. It was the loss of this map which occasioned the difficulties terminated in 1842 by the Ashburton Treaty. As no Boundary Commissioners were appointed, the map was the only means of giving an exact meaning to the words used.

[2] Shirley, Pownall, Bernard, and Hutchinson.

[3] The "mast-ships" used to be the only way of crossing the ocean for the Northern provinces, and the "tobaco-ships" for the Southern. Even royal governors sometimes had to go by them.—Sabine, *The Loyalists*.

[4] "I am perswaded that his Lordship [North] wants to drive a bargain, and to this Eden will direct him till he has profitted himself by it. This is however a very shabby and undignified conduct for a man who has held such great situations, and who has received such favours from the Crown. Think what he, his father, his brother and son now receive from the Crown, and that his debts have been paid, which is a personal favour never before conferred but once on any subject."—*Jenkinson to Robinson*, September 16, 1782. (*Abergavenny Papers*, pp. 54, 55.)

Ministers, the Dutch Ambassador spoke to Adams about this expected coalition, and said Shelburne must unite with either Fox or North.[1]

As the dreaded moment approached, the King was growing more and more restive, and was praying that posterity might not curse him for dismembering his Empire. When the Cabinet met, Richmond and Keppel were bitter against Oswald, and said he was really only an additional American negotiator—he had better be recalled. Shelburne and Townshend refused—Franklin trusted him, and Shelburne wanted him to conclude a commercial treaty after the peace.[2] The main question now was the Loyalists —Shelburne was very loath to abandon them, but on the other hand he was afraid of throwing America back into the arms of France.

Vaughan came over to implore Shelburne to give way, and Strachey was sent back to demand additional limitations as to the distance at which Americans might fish off Cape Breton;[3] and again to insist on an indemnity to the Loyalists for their estates —also for the proprietary rights of the Penns and the heirs of Lord Baltimore. Strachey returned to Paris on the 24th of November. During his absence the breach between France and the States had widened—for de Vergennes not only persisted in his demands as to the Fishery and the Boundaries, but favoured amnesty and restitution for the Loyalists; until the American Commissioners suspected him of wishing to see the United States not too much united—a Loyalist party, weakening the young Republic, perhaps seemed to France not wholly undesirable in the future! The Commissioners were now openly saying that the States could not continue the war for French and Spanish objects.

[1] Mr. Grand told Adams there was "a great fermentation in England, and they talk of uniting Lord North and Mr. Fox in Administration; the Duke of Portland to come in, and Keppel to go out. But this is wild."—Adams' *Correspondence*, iii. 316.

Just before Laurens came, there were persistent rumours "that the King will bring in some of his old Ministers." Adams says there never was a more egregious blunder than to try to save the honour of the old Ministers. The true policy was to throw all the odium of the war on them and the Tories, "*but the old party with the King at their head is still too strong.*"

[2] Franklin wrote to Shelburne his belief that "the moderation, prudent counsels, and sound judgment of Oswald might contribute much, not only to the speedy conclusion of a peace, but to the framing of such a peace as may be firm and lasting."—BANCROFT, v. 540.

[3] Franklin said, "Are you afraid there are not fish enough, or that we shall catch too many? though you know that most of the money we get for them will be spent on your manufactures."—October 30, 1782.

"You are afraid," said Oswald to Adams, "of being made the tools of the Powers of Europe." "Indeed I am," said Adams. "What Powers?" asked Oswald. "All," said Adams. He was afraid England would try to "clip the wings of America."

At the same time Jay and Adams told Oswald that if peace could not be had unless they agreed to provide for the Tories, the war must go on for seven years longer, "as Congress had no power whatever in a matter which concerns each State severally." In reply, Shelburne again warned them that their cause would not gain by waiting till Parliament met. To gain time, he had prorogued it to December 5, and he told Fitzherbert that it must be peace or war before Ministers met Parliament.

On the 25th the Commissioners met at Oswald's lodgings. Strachey made an elaborate speech, explaining the objections to the Article on the Fishery, and insisting on the restitution of the Loyalists as "the grand point on which a settlement depended." If these terms are not accepted, the affair must come before Parliament, when every man will be demanding compensation for the refugees. Adams now brought all his great legal and local knowledge to support the interests of New England in the Fishery. "There were," he said, "three lights in which the fishery could be viewed. 1. As a nursery of seamen. 2. As a source of profit. 3. As a source of contention." Did England consider us as worse enemies than France? Would she rather France had the seamen than America? Would she rather France supplied the markets of Cadiz and Lisbon with fish, than America? France would never spend any of that money in London; America would spend it very nearly all. And as a source of contention — how could America prevent her fishermen, "the boldest men alive," from fishing in prohibited places?[1]

At last Jay asked if Oswald could now conclude? Strachey replied, "Yes—absolutely." "Then this is an Ultimatum?" Strachey "was loath to reply," but at last said, "No." But Oswald

[1] Adams showed that the Treaty of Utrecht admitted the French to fish from Cape Bona Vista to Cape Riche. He told them how the cod and haddock come into the rivers, creeks, etc., "and up to the very wharves," on all the northern coasts of America, in the month of April, "so that you have nothing to do but step into a boat and bring in a parcel of fish in a few hours"; but that in May they begin to withdraw, so they say at Boston, "When the blossoms fall, the haddock begins to crawl." At Newfoundland it was the same; and neither French nor English could go from Europe and arrive early enough "for the first fare. Our vessels could, being so much nearer—*an advantage which God and nature put into our hands*." (The italics are not in the original.)

hesitated, and that day and for three days more the discussion went on. On the 26th Fitzherbert was present—the first time Adams had seen him. He came about the Fishery. The discussions on this and the Tories went on to the 29th. That day they all met at Jay's apartment, and for the first time Laurens was with them—he had just been exchanged for Cornwallis. The Fisheries came up first. By the limitation insisted on by Fitzherbert, American fishermen now might not fish within three leagues of the coast of Nova Scotia, or fifteen leagues off Cape Breton. Adams, steadily supported by Franklin and Jay, spoke against these limitations, and said he would not set his hand to the Treaty unless they were struck out.[1] He also disproved by documents the exclusive rights claimed by France to any part of the Fishery. Then came the burning question—the Loyalists, and the proposal for restitution was unanimously rejected—Franklin being especially emphatic. Adams says, "if it had depended upon me, I would have compensated the wretches." It was the critical moment of the treaty—peace or war hung on their decision. Fitzherbert thought that as Oswald's instructions were "so particular," he could not yield on the Fishery. Adams said there was time for a courier to go to London. Fitzherbert replied that this was to wait till Parliament sat—"all must be laid loose before Parliament—it is going to sea again." Franklin said, if another courier went to London he must carry something more about a compensation to the sufferers in America! And he brought out a paper with a claim. "The first principle of the Treaty is justice and reciprocity;" and to demand payment of the old debts, when the British have destroyed the merchandise, is as though a draper should sell a piece of cloth on credit, send a servant to take it back by force, and then ask for payment.[2] Then he told of the carrying off of goods from Boston, Philadelphia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, etc., and the burning of the towns. Adams recounted Gage's agreement with the town of Boston, when he promised they should remove their goods if they gave up their arms. They gave up their arms, and then Gage seized their goods.

[1] Adams represented the impossibility of maintaining restrictions on the Fishery. "If we were forced off at three leagues' distance, we should smuggle eternally . . . in seven years, we should break through all restraints, and conquer Newfoundland itself, and Nova Scotia too." Fitzherbert always smiled, and said it was very extraordinary that the British Ministry thought the restriction would prevent disputes, and "kill the seeds of war," but the Americans thought it so "strong a seed of war"—but "he thought the probability" was on the American side.

[2] "The British themselves had confiscated all debts and other property of patriots in South Carolina."—BANCROFT.

Franklin spoke of his own library, carried off from Philadelphia. Jay and Laurens gave other instances. All our notable devices for reducing the Colonies were thrown at our heads, till it seemed we might have to pay for them.

Oswald did his best to get the Treaty signed *immediately*. But he could only do this with the consent of Strachey and Fitzherbert, and they were still for consulting Government once more. "We can wait," said Adams, "while a courier goes." But this was to "bring it into Parliament," and if the Treaty was not signed before Parliament met, it would be all up with the Peace. Franklin saw the danger, and to quicken them he said, "IF there must be delay, we must reconsider the clause about the Debts." But Strachey prided himself on this Article as his great achievement—rather than risk it, he joined Oswald. Fitzherbert, now alone, reflected that peace with the United States was the best way of forcing France and Spain to declare their own Ultimatum. The English Commissioners retired to consider.

When they returned, Fitzherbert said that he and Strachey had decided to advise Mr. Oswald to accept the terms at once. So they all sat down again, and read over the whole Treaty, corrected it, and agreed to meet to-morrow, at Oswald's, and sign.

It was agreed there should be no further confiscations of the Loyalist estates, and that all pending proceedings should be dropped. The American Commissioners also agreed to recommend Congress to recommend the respective States to pass an Act of amnesty and restitution.[1] The Article on the Fishery now gave Americans equal rights with British fishermen, to take fish off the coast of Newfoundland, and on the coasts, bays, and creeks of all other British dominions in North America. The Americans

[1] Congress did unanimously consent, and unanimously issued the recommendation to the States. But it fared hard with the Loyalists, though later some States—as South Carolina—relaxed the laws against them, and even restored their estates. Shelburne had hinted that England ought to compensate them. Many came over to England, organised an Agency, and pressed their claims. In 1783, they published a tract, *The Case of the American Loyalists impartially stated and considered.* A Bill was brought in, and a Committee sat. By March 25, 1784—the last day for presenting claims—2063 persons claimed £7,046,278, and debts to a further amount of £2,354,135. The whole business was not settled till 1790. Sabine considers that the Loyalists "were well cared for. . . . The Americans who took the royal side, as a body, fared infinitely better than the great body of the Whigs. . . . The rewards of those who served under Congress were extremely limited. . . . In truth, thousands were allowed to go down to the grave in abject want and destitution." —*American Loyalists.*

extended the recovery of debts to all creditors. Laurens inserted an Article prohibiting the British troops from carrying away "any negroes or other property of the inhabitants" of New York. Fitzherbert still wanted to send a courier to London before signing —but he was reminded that if he did, the courier must take a memorial for damages done by the British troops. Then de Vergennes was told that the Commissioners were agreed; and that evening Strachey wrote to Nepean: "Are we to be hanged or applauded for rescuing you from the American war? If this is not as good a peace as was expected, I am confident it is the best that could have been made."

On November 30, 1782, the Treaty was signed, sealed, and delivered, and all the Commissioners went out to Passy to dine with Franklin.[1] Only the provisional articles were signed as yet—they were declared in the preamble to be "those inserted in and to constitute the Treaty of Peace," they were not definite until Peace with France was signed. But the peace was saved. As Adams said, "The peace depended on a day. If we had not signed, the Ministry would have changed."

De Vergennes had reckoned on the failure of the negotiations, and was not pleased. He said the Americans had bought a peace rather than made one, and on a report that the preliminary articles were a final settlement, he wrote a sharp letter to Franklin. The old philosopher-statesman sent "an astute diplomatic reply," pleading guilty to "neglecting a point of *bien-séance*," and begging de Vergennes not to gratify the English by making this little misunderstanding known. De Vergennes recovered his temper, and promised Franklin a new loan of six million livres.

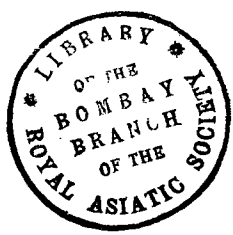
Meanwhile the negotiations between France and England were dragging. Spain was now offering West Florida for Gibraltar. There were violent altercations in the Cabinet—Ministers were unanimous in rejecting the terms of France and Spain, but could not agree what to ask. Grafton was for exchanging Gibraltar for Porto Rico and Trinidad; the King and Shelburne were for giving Florida; Richmond and Keppel were for keeping Gibraltar. But on the 3rd of December the Cabinet resolved that if France would agree to the preliminary articles, and Spain would restore Minorca and the Bahamas, and allow a "well-regulated establishment" on the coast of Honduras, they would *perhaps* exchange Gibraltar for

[1] The friends of Franklin gathered round him. Rochefoucault kissed him for joy. "My friend," said Franklin, "could I at my age have hoped for so great a happiness!"

Guadaloupe. And in consideration of this, and of West Florida being kept by Spain, Trinidad shall be ceded to Great Britain. The same day they heard that the preliminary treaty was actually signed. But Parliament met before any understanding had been arrived at with France.

On that day—December 5, 1782—the King told his Parliament that he had offered to declare the Colonies in North America, "FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES";[1] and prayed that Great Britain "may not feel the evils which result from so great a dismemberment of the empire; and that America may be free from those calamities which have formerly proved in the mother country how essential monarchy is to the enjoyment of constitutional liberty."

[1] The King asked Lord Oxford if he had not observed the lowering of his voice when he came to that part of his speech?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CHAPTER CXXII

THE AMERICAN PRELIMINARIES

"There are such things as national sins, and though the punishment of individuals may be reserved to *another* world, national punishment can only be inflicted in *this* world. Britain, as a nation, is, in my inmost belief, the greatest and most ungrateful offender against God on the face of the whole earth: blessed with all the commerce she could wish for, and furnished, by a vast extension of dominion, with the means of civilising both the eastern and the western world, she has made no other use of both than to idolize her own 'thunder,' and rip up the bowels of whole countries for what she could get. . . . The blood of India is not yet repaid, nor the wretchedness of Africa requited . . . all countries have sooner or later been called to a reckoning. . . . Britain, like an individual penitent, must undergo her day of sorrow, and the sooner it happens to her the better; as I wish it over, I wish it to come, but withal wish that it may be as light as possible."—Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis*, 2. To Lord Howe, 1776.

THE two sections of Opposition—led by North and Fox—began to cavil at the Treaty before they had seen it. They denounced it on opposite grounds—Stormont, because the acknowledgment of Independence was irrevocable; Fox, because it was only an Article of the Treaty, and therefore revocable.

Those who attacked the Peace professed to think that they could abuse it safely if at the same time they announced their intention of observing it. But a detested peace is not likely to be long observed. France and Spain had long suspected that the extraordinarily prolonged negotiations for peace were meant to gain time to prepare for war; and the moment Franklin heard that the Peace was to be censured, he prepared new articles, to be brought forward before the final ratification. This was only to be expected. And the truth was that the country had recovered from its fright, and thought that Rodney's victory and the failure of the assault on Gibraltar retrieved our eight years of misfortune. Probably, but for the taxes, we should have renewed the war. Fox, for one, had talked very lightly of doing so last July.

The history of the next few weeks is a terrible comment on Burke's words of warning. He himself exemplified the truth of

his own words. The result was the most lasting consequence of the American War. We are no worse off to-day because America is independent; but we are a great deal worse off because Fox broke up the Whig Party, and drove from power the one man who might have steered us safely through the last and most momentous years of the eighteenth century—the one man who, had he been in power, would have so modified the attitude of England in 1791, that the worst horrors in France might never have happened. But whether Shelburne could have done this or not, his disappearance from politics, and the discrediting of the Whig Party by its coalition with North, put back parliamentary reform in England for fifty years.

Fox and his friends justified their breach with Shelburne in July, 1782, by arguments which are the most complete condemnation of the Coalition. If they were right in refusing to act with Shelburne, because his views were not in accord with their own, and because his former political conduct had given them reason for distrust, these reasons existed in an infinitely greater degree to prevent a junction with North. If they were justified in joining North, because, in spite of all that had gone before, they believed they could now safely act with him, they had no excuse for breaking with Shelburne. There was no escape from this dilemma, and the country saw it. Every part of their justification was disingenuous. They accused Shelburne of hurrying up a bad peace, to keep himself in power; but for years they had been expatiating on the difficulty—the all-but impossibility—there would be in making peace. With almost frantic insistence, they had warned North that the entrance of each new belligerent introduced new complications, and new difficulties in the way of an honourable peace. "Agree with thine adversary quickly!" had been their cry. Agree—before France and Spain come in! Agree—before Holland is dragged in, with the Armed Neutrality behind her! Agree, while you have only America to deal with! You cannot make so good a peace afterwards. And they were right—the difficulties of reconciling the conflicting interests of four adversaries were enormous.

More than one of those who voted against the peace, as an infamous and dishonourable betrayal of this country, afterwards acknowledged that as time went on they took a much more favourable view. The Peace of 1783 was amply justified by the event. It fulfilled Jay's ideal of a peace—it had the singular merit of causing no future wars. The war of 1812 was the result of Bonaparte's Berlin Decree, not of anything in Shelburne's treaty. No one now will deny that Shelburne got us out of the American

war at a cheaper rate than we deserved, or could have expected, considering our ill-success, the number of our enemies, the still greater numbers of our ill-wishers, our lack of a single ally, and almost of a single friend. We may say with Strachey: "If this was not as good a peace as was expected, I am confident it was the best that could have been made."

The action of North is easily comprehensible—it is entirely of a piece with his whole political conduct. If his party could make it appear that not their incompetence and folly in making war, but Shelburne's in making peace, caused the disastrous end of the war, they would partly retrieve themselves. Far from shrinking from continuing the war, they hoped that a few more successes might enable us to leave off at last as victors. Then all would be well that ended well. So they accused Shelburne of making a shameful peace, a peace at any price. Fox echoed the accusation, adding, that Shelburne's motive was to maintain himself in power. A bad peace is hardly the road to popularity; but Shelburne was painted by his enemies as equally deceitful, ambitious, and imbecile. They accused him of hurrying up the peace, and of delaying it unnecessarily; of currying favour with the King, and of betraying our interests to America—again hardly the way to the heart of George III. North abused him for granting independence irrevocably, for nothing in return; Fox for granting it conditionally, in return for peace.

The attack began at once. Not much could be done on the Address—it was difficult to amend what had not been seen, and the terms of the Treaty were not yet known;[1] so every Opposition speaker began by saying that he should not move an amendment, but added that this would not prevent his disapproving of the Treaty when he did see it. All expatiated on their hopes that it would not prove to be disgraceful, their fears that it would, and their devout hopes that in that case the nation would unanimously resolve to continue the war. In the Lords, Sandwich had the effrontery to enlarge on the excellent state of the Navy—never so "respectable" as at present. The last campaign was glorious, and Rodney and Eliott had entitled us to an honourable peace. Sandwich promised to support Ministers unless they "ventured to make innovations in the constitution." Stormont was much more hostile. He questioned the wisdom of Ministers even as "disclosed" in the King's Speech. "What is this provisional treaty made with Commissioners acting under the direction of French councils?" Is it not the most prepos-

[1] Moved, December 5th, 1782. Carmarthen moved, and Lord Hawke, son of the Admiral, seconded.

terous thing the most imbecile Minister could have done? Does it not say, that "without any condition, qualification, or stipulation," America shall be independent whenever France chooses to make peace with us? Whatever France, Spain, or Holland may do, is not independence given beyond retractation? America has been treated with on an independent footing. Before Ministers were weak enough to do this, they ought to have consulted history—there is not a single precedent for such a procedure; not even "in the reign of the greatest imbecility Spain ever knew—I mean the reign of Philip II." Then, by a wise negotiation, Spain kept ten of the seventeen revolted provinces—the ten most valuable to her. Besides that, the Spanish negotiator detached the Seven Provinces from their French allies. And what is to become of the wretched Loyalists?

On this Shelburne rose. He thought the noble lord totally under a mistake as to the American Commissioners being directed by French councils—he had made no such discovery in the course of the negotiations. He believed the Americans would observe their engagements. He had always found them men of strict honour. They had acted fairly and openly. Nor was "unqualified, unconditional" independence being given to America—the King's Speech stated that independence was to take effect when peace was finally made with France. "The offer is not irrevocable; if France does not agree to peace the offer ceases." He wondered Stormont alluded to Spanish politics—Spanish politics, Spanish measures, brought this country to its present situation. He himself had "opposed and reprobated those Spanish measures, session after session; he had deprecated the vengeance of ministers; he had unceasingly endeavoured to preserve some little remains of the friendship in America for this country; some atom or spark, from which he had hoped, and did still hope, to re-kindle a mutual affection, before all the feelings, passions and habits of that country became absorbed in the politics and interests of France." Stormont had said that the Commons' resolution against the American War was not the sense of Parliament because the Lords did not pass it—but his Majesty was fully authorised to make the offer to America, "from the sense of parliament expressed on several occasions." And "it was the prerogative of the Crown to make peace and war." It had been his own incessant endeavour to put an end to the American war—"he must call it the cursed American war." He found it impossible by any other means than an offer of independence. Finding every other effort fail, he was free to acknowledge that he had advised the offer. It went very much against his nature, "it was a bitter pill, the bitterest he had ever

swallowed; no man felt more sensibly upon this diminution of empire than he did, and it was singular that those who had made this diminution inevitable should venture to question it." In concluding, he referred to Sandwich's words about "innovation in the constitution." If the innovation was a more equal representation, he was of the same opinion as ever.

FitzWilliam said that last June Shelburne was totally averse to offering independence—now he says the offer was made by himself. Nothing has happened since to make this great alteration in his sentiments. Shelburne replied that he had not altered his sentiments—he had tried to obtain peace by every other means before he made the offer. He repeated that "session after session" he had tried "to stop the madness and rage for carrying on the American war." He was not the author of the Declaratory Act.[1]

Richmond, in telling Sandwich he hoped he did not intend to claim any merit for the present state of the Navy, said that when he went out of office last March, "*there were not more than eleven ships of the line fit for service.*" There is no trace of any denial of this. Richmond also reminded the House that the raising the siege of Gibraltar was due to Lord Howe, who commanded a fleet better equipped than any for years past, and officered by some of the best officers in the service,—they came forward when they saw an Admiralty Board they could trust; and so, though the combined fleet was greatly superior, it durst not engage ours. Richmond also alluded to the "innovations"—a more equal representation of the people was no innovation. The present House of Commons was a mock representation! The Address was then agreed to, without a division.

In the Commons, a far fiercer attack was made. There, the North party took the same line as Stormont in the Lords, while Fox and his friends tore the King's Speech limb from limb—there was scarcely a sentence in which they did not find something wrong. Fox began by insinuating that it contained a lie—it made the King speak as though orders for the cessation of offensive war in America were not sent till after the close of last session (that is, after Shelburne came into power[2]). This was an imputation on

[1] Shelburne joined with Chatham to oppose this Act—it was one of the great points of difference between Chatham and Rockingham. And though at the moment it was passed the Americans were so pleased at the repeal of the Stamp Act that they took little notice; it became later a great obstacle to an accommodation of the dispute. Franklin said the Act did not matter if we never put it in practice—the Revenue Act did put it in practice, and it then became a serious factor in the dispute.

[2] "My Lords and Gentlemen: Since the close of the last session, I have

the character of a noble friend now no more. Pitt interrupted, to assure Fox there was no shadow of a ground for any such imputation; but Fox said he had not the slightest doubt that such an inference might be drawn—though he was sure Administration did not mean it—it was "only by inadvertency." Not having seen the Treaty, he could neither approve nor condemn it—he would take for granted that the unconditional independence of America was recognised by the first Article. He said a great deal on the good policy of giving independence, unconditionally, and not in return for peace. But he was unable to account for the delay. When his Majesty ordered him to write to Mr. Grenville in Paris, and authorise him to offer unconditional independence, he obeyed with pleasure only equalled by that with which he read the letter of Lord Shelburne to Sir Guy Carleton. But even before death removed the noble Marquis from the Treasury, Lord Shelburne had begun to speak of the dreadful consequences that must ensue if America were separated, and gave it as his opinion that the offer already made, and the orders to Carleton, were conditional, and could be retracted. Fox considered himself "ensnared and betrayed"; when he "saw persons in whom I had originally no great confidence, so eager to delude," he resigned his seat in the cabinet, "with the heartfelt satisfaction of having maintained my principles unstained," and the prospect of doing, by leaving, what I could not do by remaining.

His hopes were now fulfilled—"thank Heaven, the measure was now taken," the independence of America was acknowledged. Shelburne had set his hand to it, though it had been "insidiously said that it would be the ruin of the country, and that he would be a traitor who should do it." "But if any peer should dare to impeach the Earl of Shelburne for having done this, I, said Mr. Fox, will stand up as his advocate—I will hold him harmless, and protect him from the accusation of 'having dared to give away the rights of Great Britain'—I pledge myself that the recognition of American independence shall not be 'stained with the blood of the minister who should sign it.'"[1] After more irony, Fox said he feared Ministers would so act as to create suspicion, even where they

employed my whole time in that care and attention which the important and critical conjuncture of public affairs required of me.

"I lost no time in giving the necessary orders to prohibit the further prosecution of offensive war upon the continent of North America," etc.

[1] "Mr. Fox here alluded to expressions made use of by the Earl of Shelburne in the House of Lords in the course of the last session."—*Parliamentary History*, xxiii. 235, note.

meant honestly—for instance, the Secretary of State's letter to the Lord Mayor styles the Colonies "the United States," but in the Speech that name is not used. As for the terms, he feared they would be found to be unfavourable—"a melancholy gloom was on his mind." Much as he desired peace, he would not go the lengths to obtain it which the seconder of the Address (Mr. Bankes) seemed willing to go—he had told us we were so reduced that no terms could be too hard for us to digest; our resources were dried up, we could hardly bear our burdens. "*He himself was not yet so desponding as to say that he would not rather carry on the war still longer, than submit to a dishonourable peace*"—especially as since the signing of the American Preliminaries we had got only three enemies to deal with; and "*we should be able to spend in operations against the three remaining hostile powers the four or five millions that used to be spent on the continent of America.*" And Mr. Bankes was not satisfied with "subscribing to any terms merely for the sake of getting peace"—he "consulted the durability of it, and seemed ready to sacrifice everything in order to make it lasting: now he was of a different opinion; for in making a disadvantageous peace, he would not for a moment think of its durability"—he would only attend to "availing himself of the cessation of hostilities, to cultivate the friendship of some of the great powers of Europe, and *to make such alliances as would enable him to go to war again with greater prospect of success.*"

Having thus justified the worst suspicions of France, Fox spoke of Gibraltar. After ably showing its value, he said that Bankes wanted to give it up to prevent future wars—a "*most delusive maxim.*" For ambition grows with what it feeds on, and if we give up Gibraltar because Spain wants it, she will begin to want something else, and try to get it by new wars. "It is wiser to continue expensive wars, than by foolish concessions to purchase a temporary peace. The gentleman may talk of the durability of peace, *but I shall never think it wise to pay much regard to that prospect.*" He would not take it on him to say that in no possible situation ought Gibraltar to be "bartered"—but Ministers ought to rate it as high as it ought to be, and get adequate compensation. He repeated that Shelburne had the means of continuing the war, and he quoted his not very wise speech about the numbers of men to be seen riding in hackney-coaches and travelling on the Bath Road, who could be set to fight. Fox's was a most mischievous speech, and had the finances of France been in a better state, she would probably have broken off the negotiations at once, sure that

England would soon find a pretext for another war. She would only have done as Fox was recommending England to do.

Johnstone as usual attacked Lord Howe—the relief of Gibraltar (though so glorious) had been mismanaged, and in particular, Howe had ordered Admiral Barrington to run away. North's speech was less warlike than Fox's—though he too said that he for one would never consent to a treaty derogatory to this country; and if (as he heard whispered) France or Spain were arrogant in their demands, he trusted the nation would unanimously concur in prosecuting the war with vigour. Then he most deservedly twitted Fox. It was a little extraordinary that the same hon. gentleman, whose picture of our navy a few months ago made every man in the House tremble, now stoutly affirms that it can cope with France and Spain united—and all—even Rodney's victory—owing to the present First Lord of the Admiralty! He did not doubt great diligence had been used, but how could ships spring up like mushrooms in a night, unless the former Admiralty, by their preparations, had led the way to it? No debt, no distresses, ought to make us accept a dishonourable peace. We were now nearly, if not quite, upon a footing with the enemy everywhere. Spain was driven to the last extremity to raise supplies—America had no money, "her paper scheme had died away," and she had vainly tried to raise taxes; France was greatly distressed; Holland had proved "an inconsiderable enemy." We need not fear the continuance of war, if necessary.

Pitt, who began by saying there were several things unfortunate in his situation that day, "but the calamity under which he chiefly laboured was his youth," made a long and able defence. He declared his confidence in Shelburne's integrity. Shelburne's "peculiar attention to business, and candour and propriety since he (Pitt) had the honour of acting with him, in his opinion rendered him not at all liable to the charges preferred against him by the hon. gentleman for duplicity, and a tendency to make professions which he did not mean to perform."

Pitt reminded Fox that he used to say "hardly any peace could be a bad one in our present circumstances." Now language was altered! Ministers, however, did not intend that any man, in agreeing to the Address, should be bound to approve the articles of peace—the Address only thanks his Majesty for concluding an agreement which removes the American question, and clears the way for a general and honourable peace. The provisional articles would be laid before them in a few days, and then Parliament will have an opportunity of deciding on the

conduct of his Majesty's Ministers—meantime, they wish that their conduct should be particularly enquired into. They wish every sentence of the Address to be examined.

Burke did not see that the Chancellor of the Exchequer need lament his youth—he wished to Heaven they could confide as implicitly in the honour of other members of Administration as they could in that of the young Chancellor of the Exchequer. He then charged the King's Speech with "delusion and insinuation." His Majesty is made to say he has sacrificed his own considerations, not to the necessity of the case, but to the advice of his Parliament; "by this means the whole of the consequences which were said to be apprehended from their (the Americans') want of monarchy, were flung in the teeth of parliament." This he conceived to be an instance of the duplicity of the Minister, extremely consistent with the general tenor of his conduct. There was something in this neither manly nor generous. It was a little, low, left-handed policy which the Americans would despise. It was making his Majesty do that "with sheepishness which he might have done with grace." It was making him say that he did it "against wisdom, good sense, necessity and policy, in constrained obedience to the advice of an ill-judging House of Commons." All is charged upon this House! "How must surrounding nations feel when they see the King of Great Britain made to speak in such a strain!" Then the King is made to fall on his knees, and pray that this misguided people may not suffer the consequences of the want of monarchy—this people, never designed for monarchy, in their nature averse to monarchy, who never had any other than the smell of monarchy, at a distance of 3000 miles—are guarded by the prayers of the King of Great Britain from the consequences of the loss they have incurred through the House of Commons!

Burke had more reason in what he said on Gibraltar. It was invaluable, because it was impregnable. Porto Rico—which he had no doubt Spain would offer for it—was not an equivalent. The end of his speech was a furious attack on Shelburne for the manner in which he had carried out Burke's plans of reform. He disclaimed any share in it—the manner "was entirely their own—as mean and inhuman as his was public and generous. *He* had aimed only at the destruction of parliamentary influence, and of sinecures for parliamentary men,—*they* had aimed their blows at poor inferior officers of twenty, thirty, forty pounds a year—their whole dependence after a life of service."

Philip Yorke, in moving the Address, had expressed his hope that when this subject came before Parliament, "if there appeared

cases of peculiar hardship, they would suffer the places to remain during the lives of the present possessors, especially where the places themselves were inconsiderable, and the possessors advanced in years"—that is, in the precise cases to which Burke referred. The Address was agreed to *nem. con.*

Next day Fox returned to the assault. A doubt had struck him—was the provisional treaty with America "done unconditionally"? Would it remain in force if the general peace was not soon concluded? If not, we should have nothing in the shape of peace with America, and he would retract every syllable of praise he had given. He heard another explanation had been given in another place. He also wished to deny—what had been said of him yesterday—that he was always a friend to the independence of America. "*This was not the case. He had all along considered the independence of America as an evil of great magnitude, and as such he had always spoken of it.*" But when America became independent five years ago, he wished us to do with grace what we must now do without it. Thus he admitted that he had felt precisely as did the man he was hounding from office.

Townshend replied that the provisional articles were to take effect—as the King's Speech stated—whenever a general peace is concluded. Pitt then said the "clear indisputable meaning of the provisional agreement" was "unqualified recognition" of independence. This article was to be inserted in the treaty with the belligerent Powers, "whenever" that treaty should take place. No deceit of any kind lurked beneath the language which had been used. He denied ever charging Fox with arguing that the independence of America was good in itself for this country.

This day Burke made a still more violent speech, taking as his text the King's Speech.[1] It was "guarded with insidious perplexity of expression"—the offer of independence might be only a conditional temporary offer. It was "strange and contradictory," "full of ridiculous promises and boasts." The King's prayer was "a piece of hypocritical cant played off at the expence of parliament." The House was warranted in suspecting duplicity and delusion. If the doubt was only on the head of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (of whose virtue, integrity, and honour he entertained the highest opinion), his mind would be satisfied

[1] "The hon. member indulged himself with a free commentary on the text of the Speech, taking the several passages in succession. He did this in a vein of wit, argument, and satire, so finely blended and so strongly carried on, that the House was kept in a burst of laughter the whole time."—*Parliamentary History.*

with the declaration that right hon. gentleman had just made—but he was sure the Speech was not penned by his right hon young friend. Burke seemed positively infuriated by the passage in the Speech which asked for "temper, wisdom, and disenterestedness" on the part of Parliament. He never heard so extraordinary a request—as though wisdom was a thing that could be produced at the pleasure of the King! Then his Majesty calls for disinterestedness. What a libel on the House! An insult beyond his power of imagination to conceive! Will the House bear to be told by a Minister that they are collectively and individually a servile and corrupt set of men, without virtue or zeal? "My people expect these qualifications of you, and I call for them." Here is a strain of bluster to which the House is unaccustomed. Such an indignity has not been offered to this House since King Charles I came to look for the members who had offended him! Let the House declare it will not be slandered or tutored by the King's Ministers! Burke said he believed the House "was tainted with interest, and that corruption was to be found in it"—but the people of England must rebuke it, not Ministers. He had preached a very long sermon, but they must not call him Parson Spintext, for the text was the longest that ever required a comment, and "with great earnestness, he declared he thought the Speech a compound of hypocrisy, self-commendation, contradiction, and folly," and if unanimity were not so absolutely necessary at that moment, he would move an amendment—and even yet he was not determined whether he would not still propose one.

Pitt replied in a strain of dignified gravity in strange contrast to Burke.[1] "The present was not a moment for mirth." He rose to bring back the House to sobriety and seriousness, and tell them this was not a time for "the exhibition of a gaudy fancy." He declined Burke's "compliments," as they were accompanied with animadversions which only the elegance of the hon. gentleman's genius could save from being ridiculous. He did not believe the House would call the Speech "a farrago of hypocrisies and absurdities," when they had *nem. con.* thanked his Majesty for it. The language was "plain, intelligible and sincere." Burke had been very severe on the paragraph referring to an offer made by the citizens, when every man that could be spared was being sent to relieve Gibraltar. The citizens of London had offered to embody themselves to

[1] "He should be happy to share in the delights of that fertile imagination which had so long been the wonder and pleasure of that House;" but he could not approve of "the indiscretion of that wit which so unseasonably ran away with the good sense and sober judgment of the hon. gentleman."

defend the City. Did anyone believe that there was the smallest intention on the part of Ministers to make an unconstitutional use of this? As for sincerity, he solemnly pledged himself never to be a party to fraud, for the sake of retaining his station. Fox defended himself for having voted for the Address—it was only because he thought Ministers right in the treaty with America. As to the Speech, he agreed with Burke.[1] On the 11th, on a motion for the supply of the Navy, Fox insisted on knowing "positively and explicitly" whether we were to have peace or war. To check speculation on the rumours of peace, Secretary Townshend had written to the Lord Mayor, on November 23, assigning as a reason for proroguing Parliament the Treaty of Peace then in negotiation between this country and the belligerent Powers, and promising to tell the Lord Mayor the day Parliament met whether we were to have peace or war.[2] Fox professed not to believe that any treaty was being negotiated. "Had Ministers any real grounds to go on? *For his own part he believed they had not.* . . . He saw such duplicity in some of their conduct, that he could not trust them." He then abused them for writing the letter. If they had meant to create speculation they could have invented no better way. It told the speculators that now was their time. If we had been told the result on the day Parliament met, or a day or two after, "it might have atoned for such a blunder." His Majesty's Ministers owed it to the public to say whether any unforeseen circumstances had broken off the negotiations "said to be on foot," and on account of which they prorogued Parliament, and wrote such letters to the Lord Mayor and the Bank. Or else they ought to apologise for so extraordinary a step. It had caused so much mischief, "and might be the cause of so much more, in consequence of the

[1] In a second very short explanation, Burke said that however he might differ from Pitt, "no circumstance under heaven could make him treat him with scorn and contempt." Fox's party were already bidding for Pitt.

[2] The letter of November 23 said that Ministers, anxious to prevent the mischiefs commonly arising from speculating in the Funds at such times, had asked his Majesty's permission to tell the public, through the Lord Mayor, that "the negotiations, now carrying on at Paris, are brought so far to a point, as to promise a decisive conclusion whether for peace or war, before the meeting of parliament, which will, on that account, be prorogued from Tuesday the 26th instant, to Thursday, December 5." A second letter, of December 3, informed the Mayor that a messenger had arrived with news that the provisional articles were signed on November 30, between his Majesty's commissioners "and the commissioners of the United States of America, to be inserted in and to constitute a treaty of peace, which is to be concluded, when terms of a peace shall be agreed upon between Great Britain and France"; and begged the Lord Mayor to communicate this to the public at once.

gambling it would produce, that hundreds of respectable but credulous families might be ruined." If Townshend was the deceived and not the deceiver, let him say so.

Townshend declined either to explain or apologise—an explanation of the difficulties in a negotiation for peace would be highly dangerous during the transaction. The letter to the Lord Mayor was written "to suppress that scandalous practice of stock-jobbing, which was one of the greatest national disgraces; and at no time was it likely to be carried to a greater length than on the approach of a peace." The practices of this sort at the last peace were most scandalous—those who were old enough must recollect what fortunes were made.

Johnstone then boldly asked for the provisional articles! He also said that the Act "on which independence was declared was surreptitiously obtained from that House"—nor did it "go as far as it had been construed." Eden—perhaps a little ashamed of the tone of the debate, said that the differences between Ministers, made so much of, seemed to him mere quibbles on words. The Colonies at this hour possessed both an actual and an acknowledged independence—whether preliminary to a treaty of peace, or the preliminary of a treaty, was immaterial so far as the recovery of "the late colonies" was concerned. He asked Fox why, when in "the plenitude of his power," he did not bring the question of independence before Parliament? Eden said he considered the contest was given up from the hour the vote passed for a defensive war—that vote made independence necessary, though it did not oblige "the gratuitous cession of Carolina and Georgia."

Burke compared Ministers to the serpent with a head at each end—"they hissed a different language from the head and the tail." He sneered at Townshend for asking to have the speculators pointed out to him—if he wanted to know them, his hon. friend might take him "to Jonathan's or the Bank." He also insinuated that no negotiation for peace was going on! If there was, why was not Parliament "properly informed"? Pitt owned he had promised the provisional articles should be laid on the table in a few days, but he hoped the House would not accuse him if it was a week or a fortnight—they would be communicated the moment war or peace was decided. He persisted in saying that American Independence was acknowledged "substantially and conclusively," and could not be revoked, even if the present treaty should go off.

On the 12th the Thanks of the House were voted to General Eliott. Rumours were going round the town that Lord Shelburne

meant to give up Gibraltar; and Sir George Howard—a supporter of North—proposed to add after the word "Gibraltar," the words, "the most valuable and important fortress of our foreign possessions." Fox seized the opportunity—he did not credit the report—no Minister would dare to do it, but it was as well to let Spain know this nation would not suffer it. The amendment was withdrawn, as likely to embarrass Ministers,[1] but the substance was taken down, and despatched to Shelburne, who sent a messenger with it next morning to Fitzherbert in Paris, ordering him to show it to de Vergennes and d'Aranda. D'Aranda had received positive instructions to sign no peace, however favourable, which did not include the cession of Gibraltar; but on receiving this message, he took on himself the responsibility of disobeying, and signed the Spanish Treaty on his own risk.[2]

The King was very angry with Pitt for saying independence was irrevocable. He wrote to Shelburne that it was a mistake—independence "was alone granted for peace." Pitt ought to say his words were taken to bear too strong a meaning—so young a man need not be ashamed of making a slip.

On the 13th FitzWilliam again attacked Ministers on the question of independence. Different explanations had been given in the two Houses—that it is conditional and revocable, and that it is unconditional and irrevocable. Which is it? Shelburne indignantly refused to answer—there was no precedent for such a question—nothing could be more unwise, more unsafe, as well as more unparliamentary than the proposed discussion. He refused to disclose "the secrets of the King." The House would very soon have a right to call for the Agreement. Meanwhile, Ministers held themselves responsible for the Articles it contained. And let the House remember that the thing was done, the Treaty was signed—producing it could not alter it.

FitzWilliam replied that he did not wish to embarrass Ministers in their treaty for a general peace, and God forbid he should ask the noble earl to reveal secrets. All he wanted was to remove ambiguity. The King's Speech told him all he wished to know, and an official letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend to the Lord Mayor and the Directors of the great Companies, said that a

[1] On the 14th of October, 1782, Gibbon wrote to Holroyd (in Edinburgh) that Eden had put the state of parties as, "Minister, one hundred and forty; Reynard, ninety; Boreas, one hundred and twenty; the rest unknown or uncertain. The last of the three by self or agents talks too much of absence, neutrality, moderation. I still think he will discard the game."

[2] Wraxall, *Parliamentary History*.

Treaty was concluded with "the United States of America." If they were "the United States" we must conclude them independent—otherwise they would be called colonies. But one of his Majesty's Cabinet Councillors—one who had as much if not more power than any other—had said the provisional articles were conditional, and depended on the French Treaty. It was this he wished to have explained. Shelburne again refused to explain a matter which could not be explained without danger; but he assured the House that every one of his Majesty's Ministers acted avowedly on the principle of ending the American dispute. He would not argue on a paper which could not be produced. In this debate, Richmond declared that he had found no variation of sentiment or conduct in his colleagues with regard to America, nor had he any distrust in Shelburne's integrity from anything he had seen since he came into office.

Such a declaration from Richmond—who was for independence when Chatham opposed it—must tell strongly for Shelburne, both as to "integrity" and to the part he played in the negotiation; while the official use of the term "United States" was in itself an acknowledgment of independence sufficient to satisfy all genuine doubts.

On the 18th, in the Commons, Fox attacked Shelburne for talking of secrecy, and sheltering himself behind his conscience from whatever he did not like to face. He referred to Shelburne's letter to Carleton, telling him that independence was to be declared unconditionally. Mr. Secretary Hamilton's letter to the Lord Mayor of Dublin said that independence was "finally recognised by England in a treaty to take effect whenever we should make peace with France." The Lord Lieutenant thereupon spoke of England and America as "those two Powers." Now he hears independence is only conditional! As though determined to feed French suspicion, Fox said he would not call for the Treaty if Ministers would assure him that there were parts not yet ripe for disclosure—*he had heard that there were secret articles in the Treaty unknown to France*—he did not wish to see them—he would not even ask Ministers to say there were such! He only wanted to know whether the Treaty with America would survive the negotiations with France—supposing they did not end in a peace? Having sown this diabolical suspicion in the minds of the French, Fox moved for such parts of the Provisional Articles as related to independence to be laid before the House, and Cavendish seconded.

Thomas Pitt moved the Order of the Day. He did not deny

differences between Ministers, nor say they were of no consequence; but he had heard no argument for the utility of producing the paper before peace or war was decided. Then he said distinctly that "independency was given as the price of peace, and as such accepted by America." If America was satisfied, we need not be more American than the Americans themselves. He knew little about the oath of a Privy Councillor, but if "the loose conversations"[1] upon these topics were not a breach of oath from Ministers, it was at least a very great breach of discretion, and he had tried to catch the Speaker's eye thus early, only to adjure Ministers not to repeat that indiscretion by suffering one word more of explanation to pass their lips. Lord Mahon—who seconded Thomas Pitt—said Fox had misquoted Shelburne; Shelburne took refuge behind his oath, not as to the nature of recognition, but of the contents of the Treaty. Mr. Fox had moved for that part only which might fix an odium on Ministers for surrendering dominion over America without any condition—whatever stipulation there might be in favour of England could not be produced under the terms of his motion. Maitland asked for the papers—if anything had retarded the Peace, it was the report industriously propagated of the duplicity of the noble lord at the head of the Treasury—the most effectual way to counteract that report was to produce the Treaty.

North twitted Thomas Pitt with his good advice—which came too late. To advise Ministers to be silent, and not to tell their secrets, was good advice, but it came after they had been guilty of telling them. The contradictions were palpable, and showed dissensions in the Cabinet, but he did not think this was a moment to produce the provisional articles. The very term "provisional" showed they were revocable. Even the present "contradictory Cabinet" could not call them provisional if they depended on no condition. And he made the House laugh with the "Highgate oath," which "carried its own absolution with it."[2] They had been told that night that independence was the price of peace, if, then, the price should be rejected, the agreement would be at an end.

[1] The Duke of Richmond had said something in a conversation at a meeting of the Society for Constitutional Information. He, however, denied that he had said what was attributed to him—that the provisional articles did not extend to unconditional independence. "He had said it was impossible for any treaty to provide for all contingencies; for instance, every treaty says that peace is to be perpetual, but is there any human means of enforcing this most salutary provision?"—*Parliamentary History*, xxiii. 308.

[2] By which a man swore never to drink small-beer when he could get strong, unless he liked small-beer better, etc.

He believed the Treaty was what it ought to be—conditional. But its production must do harm. It would be injurious, whether they liked it or disliked it. If they disliked it, the consequences would be palpable; if they liked it, the Court of Versailles would say, You have given up independence so glibly—the House of Commons likes it, and thinks it no sacrifice—we demand better terms.

It was the most malicious sentence North ever uttered—a covert threat to the friends, and an incitement to the enemies of independence, among whom every one of his own party might be reckoned. They had relaxed their opposition in despair—North was trying to stir them up again at the last moment, trusting to a fiasco in the French negotiation. Every man in that House knew that the French Treaty of 1778 with America prevented America from making a separate peace—hence the treaty was necessarily called "provisional." How could North vote for the production of a treaty which must wait for the conclusion of another treaty? He saw this; and the end of his speech is another covert hint to wait till all is known, and then attack all the Treaties.[1]

Thomas Pitt said that when he called independence the price of peace, it was not because independence was not to take place except in consequence of peace. Hartley, while professing to believe Shelburne a man of honour, said that if a man of honour, he must be against independence—his strong doctrines on that point were within the recollection of Congress. The whole tenor of Shelburne's life made him and many others doubt whether the American war was finally put an end to. Fox, in summing up, enumerated the advantages of showing the treaty—when the Americans saw that independence was ratified by Parliament, "all doubts would vanish; all jealousies would expire; *the bond which tied them to France would lose its energy: and if that hostile and ambitious power did not become moderate in its demands, America would agree to a separate peace.*" This suggestion that America should dishonour herself by violating a treaty, and leaving France to struggle out of the war without her, gives Fox little right to accuse Shelburne of "duplicity."

Fortunately for peace, the House rejected Fox's motion by an enormous majority.[2]

[1] "Surely Ministers would not have delivered up the independence of America, without a very considerable price. . . . Ministers were responsible for the terms they should make; and if the House interfered with them, they might plead that as an excuse for a bad peace."

[2] 219 to 46. *Parliamentary History*, xxiii. 322.

Now that the mists of party strife are somewhat dissipated by distance of time, we can see that Shelburne was doing the best he could to save the Treaty. The situation was most delicate. The danger of the whole negotiations falling through was infinitely greater than any danger that we should ever retract our acknowledgment of independence. We have but to remember the extreme care taken lest the various Commissioners for Peace sent by us to America should compromise our sovereign rights by entering into any negotiation whatever, to see that retractation was now impossible. Rather than seem to acknowledge any lawful authority in Congress, we left the Army of the Convention prisoners for five years. Now we had for months been treating with American Commissioners upon an equal footing. Treaty or no treaty, independence was safe. But the peace was far from safe. America's obligations and engagements to France placed her in a most delicate position. The American Commissioners went very near the wind in concluding the Treaty of the 30th November. Technically, it was perilously like a separate agreement, and had de Vergennes chosen to consider it so, he could have made out a case for himself. Nothing would have pleased us better than a breach between France and America. Our production of the Preliminaries before the time would almost certainly have produced that breach. We should then not only have grossly violated diplomatic etiquette, but have broken faith with America. We should have been disgraced in the eyes of the civilised world, and the war, if renewed, would have been renewed under an imputation of bad faith.

Fox knew foreign politics—though less intimately than Shelburne knew them. He knew that he was putting a weapon into the hands of the French war-party, against whom de Vergennes could but just hold his own. A few perfunctory promises to observe the peace, however disgraceful and detested, could deceive no one into thinking that such a peace would be lasting. A country which longs to be rid of an obnoxious treaty will soon find a pretext for breaking it.

Nothing Shelburne could have said would have appeased his enemies. What he did say was true, and every man in the House knew it was true. Every man in the House knew that the French Treaty of 1778 bound America not to make a separate treaty. With profound duplicity, Fox, while professing to believe that Shelburne was playing America false, was insinuating that America *had* made a separate treaty, and he was doing this, not from any mistaken patriotic zeal, but solely to

further his own political ambitions. He gained little by it. Twenty years of exclusion from office was to be the price he paid for risking the renewal of the war.

His attempt to inflame France almost succeeded. For a while it seemed as though she would not accept our terms. Her war party demanded Dominica, or the continuance of the war. Things went so far, that on our refusal to cede Dominica, France sent an Ultimatum. At last Tobago was offered instead. George III still wanted to "get rid of Gibraltar," and get as many possessions in the West Indies for it as possible. He still thought Gibraltar only "an ideal advantage." "I shall not think the peace complete, if we retain Gibraltar." He was now in a hurry to conclude, lest bad news should arrive from the East Indies, where de Suffrein had been giving Admiral Hughes much trouble. With so many possibilities which might at any moment alter our situation for the worse, any attempt to delay a settlement became a crime.

The Dutch were offering to renew all the old Treaties, and to restore everything, except Trincomalee. They were also demanding the recognition of the principles of the Armed Neutrality. After a fierce struggle, the peace party in France triumphed. Tobago was accepted, and we kept Dominica. The Dutch gave up Trincomalee. The Fishery was settled as Fitzherbert and de Vergennes had proposed — an arrangement which has been a subject of dispute (though not of war) from that day to this. French fishermen were to fish as allowed by the Treaty of Utrecht — that ill-starred treaty, always invoked when wars were brewing.

But at last, on January 20, 1783, Preliminaries of Peace between England and France, and England and Spain, were signed, and a truce was agreed upon with the States-General of Holland. The same day a Cessation of Arms was proclaimed between Great Britain and the United States of America.

And then Shelburne's enemies joined with the country's enemies to take their revenge.

CHAPTER CXXIII

THE DEBATES ON THE PEACE

"They talk much of there being no reciprocity in our treaty. They think nothing, then, of our passing over in silence the atrocities committed by their troops, and demanding no satisfaction for their wanton burnings and devastations of our fair towns and countries. . . . Can Englishmen be so partial to themselves as to imagine they have a right to plunder and destroy as much as they please, and then, without satisfying for the injuries they have done, to have peace on equal terms?"—*Franklin to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph's*, March 17, 1783.

"With regard to the peace, I own I cannot think it so bad, all things considered. If one measures it by *uti possidetis* it is surely advantageous."—*W. Wyndham Grenville to Lord Temple*, Feb. 6, 1783.

"I am much satisfied at having heard him (Shelburne) say that he repented of nothing of all that he had done, that he would do it all over again, and that he sees that he alone had the resolution to go through with it. God be praised that it is done, and that no one asks to have it undone!"—*Vaughan to Franklin*, Feb. 25, 1783.

"I composed one of the Majority. . . . But I owe it to Truth and Candour . . . to acknowledge, that when I consider the Articles of the Peace concluded by Lord Shelburne, after the lapse of Thirty Years, I am inclined to view it through a much more favourable Medium than I did at the Time. . . . I readily admit Lord Shelburne's Title to national Approbation, if not Gratitude, for the Peace of January, 1783, though I voted against it."—WRAXALL, iii. 277–8, 279.

THE Preliminaries between Great Britain and France and Great Britain and Spain were signed in Paris on the 20th of January, 1783. On the 24th Keppel resigned the Admiralty, because he did not like them. He was succeeded by Howe.

On the 27th Lord Grantham and Mr. Townshend brought the Preliminaries down to both Houses, along with the Provisional Articles with America. The Clerk read them to the Commons, Townshend moved that they should lie on the table for inspection, and Lord Newhaven that they should be printed. To this it was objected that it was unusual to print treaties, pending negotiations—Townshend said there was a delicacy in foreign Courts about treaties, not felt in our Government, and therefore Parliament had always refrained from printing preliminary

treaties. Johnstone said it was Ministers, not foreign Courts, that were delicate of letting people know what had been done! And as to precedent—the giving away of so great an empire as America was without precedent in the annals of the world! Pitt, in his most dignified tone, assured the House that Ministers wished the Articles to be read and discussed. Fox showed his hand at once—he rebuked Pitt for being offended with Johnstone, who had exercised his privilege of liberty of speech in expressing his indignation at the Article granting Independence, and Fox, though he did not share that indignation, did not blame him. Pitt replied that he was not offended at Johnstone's blaming the Peace, but at his suggestion that Ministers had anything to conceal. Wilkes ended the discussion by telling the House that the question was already decided—the Lords had ordered the Preliminaries to be printed! So the brief debate ended in laughter—but it served as a straw to show the way the wind was setting.

In July, 1782, George Selwyn, writing to Lord Carlisle, had said that Shelburne could count on 130 votes; North, "whichever side he took," about 120. "Charles and the rump of the Rockingham party, four score. This supposes only 330 on a division."[1] It was thus evident that "Charles and the rump" had the casting vote.

Already, by the end of December, the friends of North and Fox were busy with mutual overtures for a coalition against Shelburne. Here again Burke has been represented as the chief influence, and Burke's intense dislike of Shelburne as the motive. But Earl Russell says that Fitzpatrick had a much greater hand in the Coalition than Burke; and a letter written by Lord John Townshend to Lord Holland, nearly fifty years later, must set this question at rest. "I should certainly say," writes Lord John, "that George North, myself, and Adam were the most active and instrumental negotiators in the business of the coalition. *George North and I laid our heads together long before the first overtures were begun, in order to plan the best means of effecting this object.*"[2]

It ought always to be remembered that this was the same Parliament whose price staggered George III, when North sent him in the bill—the Parliament bought so dear, yet to so little purpose!

A week before the Preliminaries reached London, there were strong indications that the Peace would be attacked, and that

[1] MSS. of the Earl of Carlisle.

[2] Lord John Townshend to Lord Holland, June 15, 1830.

some of North's friends would join Fox in attacking it. By January 31st Loughborough and Eden were trying to unite with North and Fox; and the Lord Advocate, Sir Grey Cooper, and Robinson were trying to unite Fox and Shelburne, which Richmond also desired. On the 5th of February Carlisle resigned his place of Lord Steward, on the ground that the American Loyalists had been sacrificed (but some said it was because Lord Carmarthen had been given the embassy to Paris; others, that he wished to join Fox, as Shelburne's extreme unpopularity made it unlikely he could "last long"). By the 11th the Peace was growing so unpopular—thanks to the representations of both wings of Opposition—that Shelburne saw something must be done; and that day Pitt went to Fox, to offer him his former office and the return of his friends. Fox at once asked if Shelburne was to be First Lord of the Treasury? Pitt said, "Yes." "It is impossible for me to belong to any Administration of which Lord Shelburne is the head," replied Fox. "Then we need discuss the matter no further," said Pitt. "I did not come here to betray Lord Shelburne." This is said to have been Pitt's last private interview with Fox.[1]

Shelburne had brought the King to consent to Fox's return, by representing that the choice lay between letting in Fox amicably, or having the position taken by storm—in the first case, Fox would be in a minority; in the second, absolute. Fox's refusal was dictated by the same consideration. He knew that the King would never accept him as the head of a Cabinet; but with the Duke of Portland as nominal head, Fox would be as supreme as the Great Commoner was in Newcastle's Cabinet. Shelburne is said (by Walpole) to have next sounded North. It is admitted that North was not to have a seat in the Cabinet; and that Dundas—almost the only member of the Cabinet who could endure the idea—communicated it to William Adam, a personal friend of North, on his own account, telling him that the support given must be explicit and unconditional. Lord Temple thought this proposal showed Shelburne's "vanity and personal arrogance"; he believed that North would have supported Shelburne on a promise of immediate provision for his friends.[2] Wyndham Grenville,[3] how-

[1] Walpole says the first overture to Fox was made through Keppel; but as Keppel resigned on the ground of disliking the Peace, it is difficult to understand his trying to bring about a coalition which had for its object the support of the Peace.

[2] *Courts and Cabinets*, i. 301.

[3] William Wyndham Grenville, whose letters to his brother Earl Temple

ever, distinctly says that Shelburne never made any offer whatever to North. And as neither Grafton, Camden, nor Pitt would have sat with North, it was impossible for Shelburne, even had he been so disposed, to have offered North anything that he and his friends would have accepted.

But neither North nor Fox could hope to maintain himself alone. Dundas believed that *he* precipitated the junction. He alarmed North by a report that Shelburne could not stand, that Pitt would unite with Fox, Parliament would be dissolved, and the North Party be scattered to the winds. He went to Eden, and told him he had it from Shelburne himself that he was about to resign[1]—and Shelburne had told him he would not permit Pitt to resign on his account. Adam asked if nothing could be done to prevent so great a calamity as the extinction of North's party. Dundas replied, Nothing but North's support of the Peace. He bade Adam tell North that there would certainly be a Government of Pitt and Fox, with all the Rockinghams, and all Shelburne's friends, except Shelburne himself—"and there will be an end of Lord North." This seems to have decided North. As early as February 8th, Wyndham Grenville had written, "Fox's people no longer deny his negotiations with North."[2]

Shelburne made two attempts—one certainly, and probably both, through Pitt—to conciliate Fox. But when Pitt asked his

give the most detailed account of the formation of the Coalition, was the third son of George Grenville. Temple was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Wyndham (then in London) was his brother's secretary.

[1] Shelburne had sent for Dundas, and on the latter entering the room, asked him if he had ever heard the story of the Duke of Perth? The Duke of Perth had a country neighbour and friend, who came to him one morning with a white cockade (the Jacobite symbol) in his hat, and explained that this was to show that he meant to follow the Duke's fortunes. The Duke snatched the hat from his head, took the cockade out of it, and threw it in the fire, saying, "My situation and duty compel me to take this line, but that is no reason why you should ruin yourself and your family." Shelburne applied this to his own case. He found it necessary to resign, but as Dundas was "beloved by all parties," he wished him to have early notice, that he might be prepared for what must happen. "Fox and the Duke of Portland will make up a Government with Pitt, for I cannot hear of Pitt's high notions of not taking part in any Government where I am not one. He shall not think of resigning with me. Lady Shelburne is so distressed that I cannot think of remaining longer in this situation; and having worked the great work of peace, I am not desirous to remain." Perhaps Lord Holland had this incident in his mind when he wrote that he "had observed real magnanimity" in Shelburne's conduct.

[2] On the 11th, he wrote, "I know for certain that negotiations, *through more than one channel*, have been *entamé* between Fox and Lord North." (The italics are in the original.)—*W. W. Grenville to Lord Temple*, February 8, 1783.

terms, he replied, "The dismission of Lord Shelburne, and the Duke of Portland at the Treasury."

On February 13 Adam told George North (Lord North's eldest son) all that Dundas had said, and that the only way to save the party was to join Fox. The same night George North went to Fox, who agreed to see Lord North next day.

On the 14th they met at George's house. Fox seems to have been very friendly—willing to lay aside old animosities. He did, however, urge that the King must not be allowed to be his own Minister. North, after complaining of the bad system of "governing by departments"—whereby there was no unity of plan, and one Minister knew nothing of what another did—observed that "the appearance of power was all that a King of this country could have." And with this Fox seems to have been satisfied.[1]

There was still much to settle, and the whole night of the 16th was spent in settling it—not this time in person. George acted for his father, and Colonel Fitzpatrick for Fox, and the two went to and fro all night between St. James' Street and Grosvenor Square, trying to arrange what Wraxall calls "a fair partition of spoils."[2]

There was never any secrecy where Fox was concerned—a fact which probably went for much in the lenient judgments passed upon him. All through this crisis, he continued his gambling operations. "I own," says Selwyn, on March 2, "that to see Charles closeted every instant at Brooks's by one or the other, that he can neither punt nor deal for a quarter of an hour, but he is obliged to give an audience, while Hare is whispering and standing behind him, like Jack Robinson, with a pencil and paper for mems., is to me a scene 'la plus parfaitement comique que l'on puisse imaginer,' and to nobody it seems most [more] risible than to Charles himself."

A little running fire had been kept up in the House of Commons. Wraxall declares that on one occasion Nugent ex-

[1] "Thus easily and smoothly was made that coalition which in the first place overthrew Lord Shelburne's Administration; next destroyed that large and extensive popularity which Mr. Fox at that time enjoyed; and finally ruined the Whig Party."—Lord John Russell, *Life and Times of Charles James Fox*, ii. 349.

[2] They can hardly, however, have done much more than arrange for the debate next day. Grenville says on the 19th, "I *know* they have differed, not only on loaves and fishes, but on the subject of high and responsible office, and particularly about the Treasury itself, which was not settled this morning."—*To Lord Temple.*

claimed that if his Majesty's Ministers had not done their best for the Loyalists, "their blood alone can wipe away the stain on the honour of their country." Johnstone was also violent. Sheridan rudely exhorted Pitt not to speak in so high a tone. On the 14th Sheridan brought forward a motion about the Treaty with Holland—till we know it, we cannot judge of the treaty with France. By the 16th article of the French Treaty, four months were to be given to those of the contracting parties who had allies in India, to decide whether they should accede to the peace—and after four months it should be lawful for either of those contracting parties (England and France) to give those allies any assistance. As no time was mentioned, it was in the power of France to delay such an invitation, and during that time, and for four months afterwards, she could assist her allies against us—and so might help the Dutch to recover their settlements. So he thought the Crown should be petitioned not to part with Trincomalee till peace with Holland was ratified. Fox seconded. Dundas said he wondered at such a question—if Ministers said that Trincomalee would probably be given up, "from that moment Trincomalee was gone." Johnstone thought the matter very serious. Pitt rose "with great warmth"—he believed only two men in the House could approve such a motion—the member who made it, and the member who spoke last, who seconded it. Johnstone said he did not second it, and did not approve of it, though he thought it a very serious matter. Pitt retorted that his mistake was not wonderful—Johnstone had spoken as though he approved, and "he knew he was not very unlikely to approve such a motion." Did any member ever hear of Ministers rising up in their places, and proclaiming to the House the secrets of a treaty still pending? If the hon. member wished to act with propriety, why did he not move to advise the Crown not to part with Trincomalee? Why not move a censure on Ministers for having advised his Majesty to ratify the Article in question? Fox said he only wanted to obtain information, to enable the House to form a proper judgment, on the eve of the great and important discussion on the Preliminaries. The treaty now pending with Holland either referred to and depended on the treaty with France, or it did not. If it did not, the motion would be as preposterous as Pitt had said—but if the two treaties had reference to each other, we must know the parts to pronounce upon the whole. When the provisional treaty with America was called for, it was said, Wait till the treaty with France is concluded. Yet when the House had waited, they could not discover a single

article which could have had the smallest influence on the treaty between England and France.

(Could not the Articles on Boundaries, and on the Fishery, have influenced the Treaty between England and France?)

The 17th of February was fixed for the moving of an Address to the King, thanking his Majesty for having complied with the universal wish of his people in putting an end to an unhappy and calamitous war.

The Address was so modest,[1] that it was sneered at for its modesty. It differed but little—and only verbally—in the two Houses. It concerned itself almost entirely with America—thanking his Majesty for reconciliation. It expressed the hope that the several States would attend to the recommendation of Congress on behalf of the Loyalists, and promised to cultivate our own resources, and with that view to revise "all our commercial laws, and endeavour to frame them upon such liberal principles as may best extend our trade and navigation, and proportionably encrease his Majesty's naval power, which can alone ensure the prosperity of his dominions."[2]

This Address was moved in the Lords by the Earl of Pembroke. The Marquis of Carmarthen, in seconding, said he thought they could not differ as to the necessity for peace. The Confederacy formed against England was now dissolved; trade would revive; Great Britain would still be one of the first Powers of Europe. Then Carlisle made a very able speech in opposition. He, however, took care to begin by owning that "whatever the result of that debate, peace was necessary on every account, and peace once established was inviolable." The nation was tired of war; the object for which we fought was gone. But, considering the disorder in the finances of France, the intestine disturbances in Holland, the disappointment of Spain at Gibraltar, and the serious commotion in her American dominions, peace ought to be pursued with dignity and honour. It was wise to concede independence—but we ought to have obtained a provision for the Loyalists—that should have been a *sine qua non*. He suggested that they could have had "the fertile banks of the Ohio"—while admitting that the United States might not have cared to have "large tracts of country behind them

[1] "We agreed that no triumphant words could be carried, or ought to be proposed."—Grafton's *Memoirs*.

[2] In the Commons, the words ran, "a revision of our commercial laws on the most liberal principles, and in a manner adapted to the present situation of affairs, etc."

planted with persons of different political principles." (A stronger argument against the restitution of the Loyalists than any Franklin had urged!) And when our minds can hardly bear the idea of independence, we hear that we have given up a tract of country equal to almost a third of Europe. All Canada is, in fact, lost. All between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi is lost. All the forts, settlements, and carrying-places, towns and inhabitants, on the Lakes are lost—and all the fur trade. Twenty-five nations of Indians are made over to the United States, with the Forts of Niagara, Michilimakinac and Detroit—with the 10,000 inhabitants said to dwell around it. We can no longer get masts from Penobscot Bay; and all this without even the return that honour demanded—"a place of refuge for the miserable persons before alluded to." It may be said, all Canada is not lost—the line strikes the centre of the Lakes, and so gives us a reciprocal trade—and we have the free navigation of the Mississippi. But the two ports of Quebec and Montreal are a mockery without the trade of the interior—it will be costly to keep them up, and will expose us to future wars. It is like telling a man he may have the navigation of the Thames—except the locks. Better have kept all the lakes, and "slipped Niagara into our enemies' share." We might say that Niagara is a beautiful object of Nature, not worth quarrelling about—but it is the tunnel into which the whole northern trade must run. But we keep the navigation of the Mississippi—so we might say we keep the navigation of the Rhone and the Rhine! For 3000 miles we don't possess an acre of its shore; and West Florida is given to Spain. "This brings me to another consideration"—whether the Crown has the right to dismember the Empire without the sanction of Parliament. If so, the King of England might shift the seat of empire—say, to Ireland, and make over these Islands to France, or Spain, or the Pope! Then he quoted Burlamaqui, who says that a King can alienate "a patrimonial kingdom," but no other—"for then the consent of the people is necessary." And Vattel says the Kings of England cannot alienate any part of their dominions without consent of Parliament. He instances the Assembly of Coloynac, which, after the return of Francis I from his imprisonment, refused to ratify the treaty of Madrid—holding that a King cannot dismember his empire. Was not Clarendon impeached for advising the Crown to sell Dunkirk?[1] At the treaty of Madrid

[1] Dunkirk is the most northern seaport and fortified town of France. The Commonwealth forces took it in 1658. Charles II sold it back to Louis XIV for five million livres. Louis was the highest bidder—both Spain and Holland

[1720] it was argued that Gibraltar could not be ceded without the consent of Parliament. He moved as an Amendment, that, while the Treaty must be considered as binding, "being concluded," the House feels the strongest obligation to relieve those deserving subjects who have exposed their lives and fortunes for the support of Great Britain; "and at the same time, we cannot help lamenting the necessity which bids us to subscribe to articles which, considering the relative situation of the belligerent Powers, we must regard as inadequate to our just expectations, and derogatory to the honour and dignity of Great Britain."

Walsingham, supporting Carlisle, admitted that the question of independence "was entirely over"—it was given up last year, when the House passed the Enabling Bill. The fur trade will be ruined. The Indians, no longer "awed" by our forts, "their lust of plunder, their revenge for our shameful treatment of them, will give rise to scenes of cruelty from which the civilised heart must revolt." The Iroquois are cut off from us for ever. "They engaged in all our wars; in the present contest they were invited by the most flattering and seductive professions." General Burgoyne's Proclamation promised them rewards in proportion to their zeal. They accepted the condition—"*they served us well, as a testimony of which he begged their lordships to refer to the letters of Colonel Butler.*" And what is their reward? They are driven from their country—4000 of them are encamped at Niagara at this very moment, living at the expense of Great Britain. "They cost the nation an amazing sum. In the name of policy, why not stipulate for their return?" He referred to a similar clause in the Treaty of Utrecht. In 1701 the Indians made over their lands to us on the solemn promise they should be protected for ever. This treaty was renewed in 1726, and again in 1746. We have abandoned Sir William Johnson—£20,000 of his estates has been confiscated already, though "his conduct in heading the Indians, in order to moderate their cruelty, was laudable in the extreme." In the South, we have abandoned the Chocktaws, the Chickasaws, the Creeks, and the Cherokees. "How different was the policy of that great and dignified statesman, the Earl of Chatham!" He rejected M. de Bussy's boundary of Louisiana, because it would exclude the Indian nations under our protection. Then came more about the Loyalists. We invited them to join us. It was a parliamentary war, so Parliament ought to

made offers for it. (It was originally taken from Spain.) By the Treaty of Utrecht, the French were compelled to level the fortifications and agree not to restore them.

protect them. The addresses to the King from every part of the Kingdom proved that the people of England thought the war necessary, since its object was "to preserve our just dominion." We have abandoned the Loyalists to the fury of their countrymen!

Lord Townshend made a violent speech against the Treaty. The Americans had been too cunning for us. Why had we not thought of "some man from Canada, a respectable Canadian merchant," instead of Oswald? Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and Mr. Laurens had been too many for him. And the French Articles were as bad.

The French were allowed to make a ditch round Chandernagore —*to drain it.* Suppose they turn it into ramparts? That happened before, and the East India Company "did without ceremony fill up the ditch." But now a treaty allows it! Then they are to have a dependency round Pondicherry—some Nabob perhaps must submit to its being wrested from him. It was necessary to cede something to Spain, and she had got Minorca—he was not sorry; he had trembled for Gibraltar. But he could not comprehend why we had given up Florida. He could not thank the King for treaties in which there appeared the most gross ignorance and the most criminal inattention to the interests of the Empire.

Grafton said that last week, instead of men of rank and weight applying themselves to investigate the Preliminary Articles, they were struggling and intriguing for places of trust. We all know the horrors of war. "For heaven's sake! now that we have obtained peace, let us not, by our idle bickerings, deprive ourselves of its blessings." The Address only thanks his Majesty for making peace. If the peace is really dishonourable, a more vengeful road is open to you, to get at Administration openly, and not by this side-wind. Accuse them openly. There can be no defence where there is no accusation. Substantiate the outcry against the peace. "It is base, it is cruel, it is damnation," according to the noble lord who moved the amendment. All things considered, it is as favourable as we had a right to expect. Those who wish to continue the war should consider what resources we have. There would be great difficulty in finding them. According to very late advices, sixty sail of the line lay in Cadiz ready for an expedition to the West Indies—where our fleet, though superior, could not in three months recover one of our lost possessions. There were 17,000 troops in St. Domingo ready to be embarked against Jamaica.

Keppel's speech was a direct attempt to make the nation continue the war. In his eagerness to strike at Shelburne, he

talked like Sandwich in the old days—he forgot how he had said that when he came to the Admiralty he found everything even much worse than he had expected; he forgot the straits he was in last September to get the Baltic ships home, and yet send Howe to relieve Gibraltar; he forgot that he had then told the Cabinet, the King's stores were so empty that we depended on the Baltic ships for the means of carrying on the next campaign. He talked boastfully, foolishly. He "thought" Grafton exaggerated the numbers of the Spanish Navy—"it might be numerous, but many of their ships were foul." The French had more bad ships still—the two Powers had together about 123 ships of the line; we, about 109. What the Duke said about the West Indies "had nothing so terrible in it" for himself. If those ships had chosen to go to the West Indies, and to lodge troops in St. Domingo, they must have come to an engagement, "which would have been decisive, and the event of which he should not have feared to have risked." When he said 109 ships, "he included those which would be ready by May next." (So his expected decisive victory was to be won with expected ships.) With such a navy, had we a peace we had a right to expect? "By no means." He had resigned because he could not advise his Sovereign to conclude a peace of which his conscience did not approve. It was inglorious. We ought to have had a better, with ten ships of the French in our possession and not one of ours at that time in theirs. He was unfortunately an obstinate man, with an opinion of his own—but it was not founded on party or interest. Perhaps the censure in the Amendment was wrong, but he could not subscribe to the Address.

A little later in the debate Howe gave a detailed account of the Navy—*by May next*, we might reckon on ninety-nine battle-ships, "tolerably fit for service." By the best accounts, the House of Bourbon might have about 125. He repeated that the Spaniards had sixty ships at Cadiz, "in prime condition," well equipped for active service. He attributed a great deal of our late success to chance, for in strength we were greatly inferior. Many of our ships were in poor condition—his own ship, the *Victory*, was "very bad, and very unclean." He thought that if this interval was only a breathing time, we had better use it in "recruiting against the possibility of future hostility," than in "unnatural squabbles among ourselves." Keppel replied that his last accounts said there were forty-two ships at Cadiz, and he computed our force, "good, *bad, and indifferent*," at 109. He could not go into details—he did not "imagine" it would be prudent, but he did not "imagine" the enemy's

state was as good as our own, or that they had anything like such a prospect. Howe said his accounts were later than those Keppel relied on. And "good, bad, and indifferent" was a dangerous computation—"good and indifferent" was "stretching the account to the utmost verge of show"—he could hardly say of utility.

Before this Richmond had thrown the Peace overboard in a somewhat unmeaning speech. From the few materials before the House, he did not like the terms. He should not vote. He would support any Administration which meant to reform abuses, but would oppose one "in which was concerned any one of the men to whose corrupt and accursed system the country owed its present calamities."

Stormont said Ministers were resolved to force the judgment of the House merely upon what lay upon the table—they must blame themselves for the consequences. For his part, he thought there had been the grossest neglect, or the most blamable ignorance; an irremediable wound was thereby given to our dearest interests, and an eternal stain was brought on the British name. It might be contended that in limited Governments no treaty of peace could be valid without the ratification of all the Estates—but he would not rest on that. The Peace was to be held as inviolate. Shameful ignorance appeared in the American Treaty. Why was such a man as Mr. Oswald sent? He was far out-matched by any one of the four American Commissioners. The first question we ought to have asked was whether they had full powers to grant a full amnesty and restitution to the Loyalists. They were made the price of peace. How different was the conduct of Philip III of Spain to the Loyalists of the Netherlands, in the famous truce of 1609, and again in the Peace of Munster! And when the Catalonians revolted from Spain, and put themselves under the protection of France, and again under that of England, even Mazarin—"so artful, so shuffling and fallacious"—thought it policy to keep faith with them. The Fishery was "irretrievably gone." And France only wanted Tobago to be the rival of Manchester. And the Channel was not even called "the British seas," as in all other treaties.

Grantham replied very sensibly on the difference of the circumstances attending other treaties, and between a peace with one enemy, and with a host—and without a single ally. Viscount Sackville called the Treaty "the most unwise, impolitic and ruinous" this country had ever made. The abandonment of the Loyalists was a thing so atrocious that if it had not already been painted in all its horrid colours, he would have attempted to describe

it—but must have failed to find language as strong as his feelings. A peace founded on such a sacrifice must be accursed in the sight of God and man!

Lord King spoke in the worst style of the worst times of the war. He had not liked the way the war was carried on, and he liked the peace no better. "The language of war is harsh"—and the harsher the better. "The introduction of a softer note only betrays ignorance of the music." Tenderness in the beginning is cruelty in the end. If he had the conducting of it, on the first accounts of the rebellious conduct of the Americans, he would have sent a powerful force, to live on the property of the rebels—instead of taxing loyal people at home—and have kept them so, "till a salutary course of military physic" took them down from their "aereal stilts," and brought them to common-sense and allegiance. This Ministry wanted spirit as much as the former one. He called the Peace imbecile.

It was after this that Shelburne rose. Even Walpole says that "he defended himself well." He said he should not address their passions—he left that to those who had shown such ability for it that night. "As my conduct has been founded upon integrity, facts and plain reasoning will form its best support." He would waive the consideration of the critical moment at which he stepped forward—a moment when, if any credit was due to the solemn, public declarations of men, who seemed then, and seem now, to have the welfare of the State nearest at heart, every hope of renovated lustre was gone. "The ambition of advancing to the service of our country in an hour when even brave men shrink from the danger, is honourable." A peace was the declared wish of the nation at that time. How was that to be best procured? Certainly by gaining the most accurate knowledge of the relative condition of the Powers at war.

I will examine the treaty on the value of the districts ceded. We are blamed for the Canadian boundary. The annual exports of this country to Canada were only £140,000; the imports were £50,000. Suppose the whole fur trade sunk in the sea—is £50,000 a year imported in furs to continue a war of which the people have declared their abhorrence? And for many years past the preservation of this £50,000 of annual import cost on an average £800,000! I have the vouchers in my pocket, if your lordships care to examine them. And the trade is not given up—it is only divided, and divided for our benefit. All who know anything about it know that the best part of it is to northward. You are giving America a share

in a monopoly which you have been preserving at a cost of £750,000 a year. Then he denounced monopolies, which "some way or other, are ever justly punished."

Then the fishing. We have let the Americans do what we cannot prevent their doing—from their locality we cannot prevent their fishing for the first season—it begins in February; our people can never get there so soon. And as for the masts of Penobscot, I have in my pocket a certificate from one of our ablest Government surveyors, Captain Twiss, that there is not a tree there capable of being made into a mast.

When he came to the Loyalists, he expressed his grief without reserve. "I have but one answer to give—the answer I gave my own bleeding heart. A part must be wounded, that the whole of the empire may not perish. If better terms could be had, do you think, my lords, that I would not have embraced them? You all know my creed. You all know my steadiness." Neither in public nor in private life is it my character to desert my friends. I had to accept the terms, said Congress, or to continue the war. Will any man here clap his hand on his heart, and say I ought to have broken off the treaty? But I do not despond—"I rely on the wisdom, temper and honour of Congress." They did all they could—they were afraid of offending the new States. "Peremptory language is not the language of a new State." And at the worst, cannot England offer these men an asylum? Who would refuse it? Surely not that noble-minded man who would again plunge his country knee-deep in blood, and saddle it with an expense of 20 millions to restore them! Without a drop of blood, and with one-fifth of the expense of one year's campaign, we can amply provide for the Loyalists.

Why was Mr. Oswald sent to negotiate against such odds? "Because he was fitted for the great work by the qualities both of his heart and his head. He was inflexibly upright," had long been engaged in commerce, knew America well. At the same time, there might be a few men more fit—the noble viscount (Sackville)—or the other noble viscount (Stormont)—if they would have ventured again on the theatre.

As for Dunkirk, the late Lord Hawke repeatedly said that not all the art and money of France could make the bason of Dunkirk formidable to us. A noble friend (Grantham) well said, that France wanted her feathers restored to her—"and surely no sober man would continue a war to thwart a fancy so little detrimental to us?"

At the end, he reminded them of the state of the country when negotiations were set on foot.[1] Had we a taxable article not already taxed? Were we not 197 millions in debt? Our credit was beginning to totter. Our Navy was in such a condition that the noble Viscount] now at the head of the profession, in describing it, spoke low, as though he feared he should be overheard. (He looked at Keppel, till Keppel called him to order. It was war to the knife between them.)

At half-past four in the morning the House divided. For the Address—Contents, 69, proxies, 3. Not—Contents, 55, proxies, 4. Majority for the Address (and against the Amendment), 13. "There were in the House at one time of the day, 145 peers—a greater number than has been known on any question during the present reign."[2]

In the Commons, there was a still more exciting scene. All the rumours of the last month could be beheld with bodily eyes — for on the front Opposition Bench, Fox and North were sitting side by side![3] Until now, Fox had continued to speak from the Third Bench. Neither of them had been to bed till five that morning. Fox, who was used to such hours, was as fresh as ever; but poor North, always oppressed by somnolence, after heroic efforts to keep his eyes open, slipped away to the gallery, unwilling to present the spectacle of one member of the new Coalition fast asleep at the most critical moment! In the gallery, just over the Treasury Bench, he found Wraxall, and when it was impossible to remain awake — even to listen to Dundas' denunciations of himself—he lay down on the bench and forgot friends and enemies alike in sleep. He had begged Wraxall to wake him

[1] "How many sleepless nights I have spent; how many weary hours of watching and distress. What have been my anxieties for New York, which if attacked, must have fallen! . . . What have I suffered for the West Indies, where, with all our superiority of navy, we were not able to take one offensive measure, and where we were liable to lose our most valuable possessions! How many sleepless nights have I not suffered for our possessions in the East Indies, where our distresses were indescribable! How many sleepless nights did I not suffer on account of our campaign in Europe, where, with all our boasted navy, we had only one fleet with which to accomplish various objects!"—*Lord Shelburne on the Address*, February 17, 1783.

[2] "The Lords, after sitting through the cold February night, sat down to dinner with most voracious appetites at 8 o'clock on the next morning."—MACKNIGHT.

[3] That very day Fox had refused a second overture from Shelburne, made through Pitt.

whenever he was personally attacked; Wraxall did so, many times, and North did his best to listen for a few minutes—then slept again.[1]

Thomas Pitt moved the Address in an able speech. A peace, he said, was always unpopular; if the war was prosperous, hopes were disappointed; if disastrous, concessions were humiliating. As to "Ministers and candidates for ministry, he looked on them as dealers in the same merchandise—they discredited each other's wares to recommend their own." The question before the House was simply this—Whether such a peace was better than such a war? He laid the state of the country once more before them, proving by papers on the table that the interest of the public debt was increased from less than four and a half millions "at the beginning of Lord North's war," to near nine and a half millions at present. This six years' war had cost us considerably more than all the successes of Marlborough and Chatham, and all the wars since the Revolution, put together. It had entailed a permanent burden upon the land of England of 10s. in the pound additional land-tax: our expense in peace will be from 14 to 15 millions a year, with an income of 11 millions. He remembered the close of the last war, and how necessary peace was thought by some of the wisest authorities. What would they say now? The price paid for this peace to France and Spain, is one small island in the West Indies, the two Floridas, Minorca dismantled, and therefore useless to us, and some immaterial advantages to their fishery, and their settlements in the East Indies. The price paid by France at the last peace was Dominica, Grenada, the Grenadines, Tobago, St. Vincent's, all her possessions in Canada and North America, humiliating restraints on her fishery; and in Europe, Minorca;

[1] "After the end of about an hour and a half, during the greater portion of which time he seemed scarcely sensible to any circumstance that passed, he began to rouse himself. By degrees he recovered his perception; and having heard from my mouth some of the most interesting, or acrimonious passages that had taken place while he was asleep, he went down again into the body of the House, placed himself by Fox on the floor, and made one of the most able, brilliant, as well as entertaining speeches that I ever heard him pronounce within those walls. No man who listened to it could have imagined that he had lost a single sentence of the preceding debate."—WRAXALL.

It was not the first time that North roused himself from slumber to make some witty remark. He often slept in the House, but it was never safe to count on his slumber. On one occasion, when Burke tripped in a Latin quantity, North opened his eyes, corrected him, and slept again.

in Africa, Senegal; and in India, her settlements in Bengal to be left defenceless. What can we gain by another year's war to make up for the 16 or 20 millions that year will cost us?

Wilberforce seconded. He said that we wanted peace to recover our resources, and restore our commerce—for this there must be a permanent peace; and the best way of effecting this was to look if there were not in our possession things which hurt the pride of the enemy—marks of galling superiority. If there were, it was surely wise to concede them for something valuable in return.

On important occasions, Fox always put up Lord John Cavendish to make his motions—Cavendish's high character for integrity covering the multitude of other men's sins.[1] He now moved an Amendment. It was so guarded—to catch as many votes as possible, that it was rather "a hesitation in approving than a censure."[2] Cavendish said that "no man loved peace more than he did." He was glad, therefore, to accede to it, on almost any terms. The hon. gentleman had said, the question was, Shall we have peace or war? But, of course, every man would prefer the peace, "such as it was." The question was, Could a better one have been obtained? This could not be answered on a sudden—it must be enquired into. The whole of the evidence is not before us—the Dutch Treaty—one fourth of the whole negotiation—has not come in. Nor is it "strictly true" that the House has—as the Address states—"taken the Treaties into their most serious consideration"; so he would amend this—and he made the House promise to "proceed to consider."

Andrew St. John, who seconded, said that the ruin of the nation from the increase of debt and taxes was the ground on which objections to wars in general were built "by all former advocates for peace." As they were mistaken when the debt did not amount to 20 millions, perhaps they were mistaken now. The relief of Gibraltar and Rodney's victory showed we were secure from attack, and were able to act offensively.

Thus the note for continuing the war was instantly struck by the Coalition.

It was now that North, refreshed with sleep, and primed by

[1] "... spread a sort of veil over the irregularities of his party."—WRAXALL.

[2] After promising to "proceed to consider," the Amendment assured his Majesty that "whatever may be the sentiments of his faithful Commons on the result of their investigation," it is their "firm and unalterable resolution to adhere inviolably to the several articles for which the public faith is pledged, etc."

Wraxall, came down from the gallery and made one of the most able of all his speeches. He began by professing unwillingness to embarrass Ministers. Nor did he wish to say anything against the Preliminaries—"knowing the state of the nation, the necessity for peace, the enormous expence of the war." He wished Ministers had said nothing—hinting they should have put the Peace upon the King. But he was asked to approve; he had been named; he must reply. The question was, not whether Ministers could have done better, but whether they ought to have done this?[1] His whole speech goes on the assumption that anything to the advantage of France must be wrong. It is sufficient condemnation of any article that it benefits France. Permission to fortify St. Pierre and Miquelon places France in a better position than ever before. She has given back five islands for Sta. Lucia—therefore Sta. Lucia seemed to her "worth the purchase of five." He did not say what he would have said if we had given up the five for Sta. Lucia. Then in Africa, we have conceded everything; in India we have restored all the former French establishments. And this is called the principle of *uti possidetis!* By the 16th Article, peace depends on the inclination of Holland—we cannot consider ourselves at peace with France till their High Mightinesses ratify the treaty. This makes our India situation very precarious—if Hyder should not choose to sheathe his sword, he might do "our allies" infinite mischief—there is the Nabob of Arcot—a poor man. How can he defend himself against Hyder Ali?

The most interesting part of the speech concerned Dunkirk. The 17th Article of the French Treaty abrogated every article in former treaties "on what has been considered in the eyes of Europe

[1] There is a most remarkable letter from Robinson to North, dated February 1, 1783. Robinson says that North's discourse a few days ago appeared to him to have a great tendency towards a change of the conduct North has so honourably held in Parliament. "The question to be decided is what line you are to take on consideration of the Articles of Peace in the House of Commons. . . . Does your Lordship think that the objections to the Articles of Peace are such as would justify you to say that we should go on with the war? Will the country in general, although many exclaim against several Articles of the Peace, support this idea? . . . Are you sure of your following? May it not happen that Mr. Fox may approve of those very Articles of the Peace to which you would object?" If you and Mr. Fox overturn the present administration and form one, your heart will tell you that it could not be permanent or pleasant. "Speak your sentiments upon the various Articles of the Peace as they strike your mind, but do not join in any motion for an amendment of the address which may be proposed, or in anything which may lead to a disapprobation of the Peace, or towards overturning the Government."—*Draft of letter, in Abergavenny Papers.*

so important and honourable to Great Britain." Though he was free to confess that he never thought Dunkirk itself as important as it seemed to those who made the Treaty of Utrecht, yet he thought it very important, because it "tended to perpetuate former victories, and to demonstrate present power. To keep an English commissary on the territories of an enemy for the purpose of reporting, checking, and preventing any attempt to erect or repair any wall or building as a fortification—or even to clean their harbour," so as to admit ships of large burden, "could not but debase the dignity of the French, and exalt the honour, power, and authority of ourselves."[1] Yet even the Treaty of Utrecht did not satisfy North—he called this peace worse than "the very disgraceful Treaty of Utrecht."

From the worst of all treaties devised with the express object of making enmities eternal, North passed to Spain. And now, as the treaty retained Gibraltar, he affected to undervalue that post, as merely convenient for ships passing the Straits—a fine healthy climate, and good water for ships to refresh themselves, and by its situation it could keep the Moorish corsairs off our trade. But Minorca was a far more desirable possession—the finest harbour in the world, where all the navies of Europe could ride in safety. Here our fleets might have wintered, been cleaned and repaired, while our seamen refreshed themselves ashore without danger of desertion. And Gibraltar is "the cause of that discontent which will be likely to break into a war on every occasion." Spain will be always wanting to recover it.

He forgot that he had just said that Dunkirk was worth keeping as a standing humiliation to France; and he forgot too that if we gave up Gibraltar we might not always be able to reach Minorca to winter there.

Then he lamented that we had not kept Florida. He made a very curious remark on this—he regretted Florida because it would have enabled us to "impede the Spaniards' gold-trade," from which they derive all their power. "*Deprived of their foreign riches, they have no internal resource. Industry has not yet given them domestic strength. They have no positive power. All their strength arises from their foreign possessions.*" It is only there we can hurt them.

This is one of those sudden gleams of insight which show that North was meant for another sort of statecraft than that displayed in the American quarrel.

He asked why we did not adhere to the Canadian boundary

[1] Cavendish also had admitted the small importance of Dunkirk.

fixed in 1774? The Americans are now within twenty-four miles of Montreal. And why did we not make Charlestown, New York, Rhode Island, and Penobscot the price of the Loyalists' security? The Americans ought to have pitied and pardoned them, if they thought them in the wrong![1]

With cutting sarcasm Powis congratulated North on "the recovery of his influence in that House"—the country had already reaped "so many blessings" from his Administration, that every true friend to Great Britain must rejoice to see him likely to regain his ascendency! Then he begged the House to look at the Treaties with fairness—there were articles he did not like—he was sorry East Florida was given to Spain, and Tobago to France. And as for America, if Shelburne had not shown himself as great a statesman as he gave himself out to be, he had shown himself a good Christian, for he had not only parted with his cloak to America, but had given her his coat also. But notwithstanding all this, "taking the whole together, and the circumstances in which peace was made, he was ready to give his full assent, and declare himself perfectly satisfied." After plainly saying he did not like Shelburne, he said Shelburne deserved thanks for breaking the armed Confederacy against this country—which threatened our absolute ruin. "A Confederacy so strange and unnatural," that no one would believe in it till forced. "But this was the era of strange Confederacies. We had seen despots protecting an infant republic"—we now saw the counterpart among ourselves. The assertors of royal prerogative had united in an alliance with the worshippers of the majesty of the people. "The most determined advocate of the influence of the Crown went hand in hand with the great purifier of the constitution." He hoped Ministers would take better care of the refugees who had now come to them, than they had done of the American loyalist refugees. With this palpable hit he ended a speech which must have made Fox and North equally uncomfortable.

Thomas Townshend reminded the House that the boundary[2]

[1] North's self-possession was astonishing. In the midst of his speech on this, as would be supposed embarrassing occasion, "a dog who happened to find his way into the House, began to bark, and set all the members in a roar. Lord North laughed heartily; and when the House was restored to order, he threw it again into the loudest fit of laughter, by jocosely addressing the chair, 'Sir, I was interrupted by a new speaker, but as his argument is concluded, I will resume mine.'"—Wraxall, *Parliamentary History*.

[2] "The King said to a person, 'I believe the Articles of the Boundaries in the Treaty were well drawn—but I never did read the Articles nor the Treaty, nor read anything about America.'"—*Last Journals*, ii. 634.

of 1774 was that of the obnoxious Quebec Act—any attempt to enforce which would revive resentments it was our business to quiet. The forts were one of the most costly follies of the noble lord's administration—block-houses would have done quite as well.

Burke's speech is so unlike his great days, that as we read we turn back to make sure it is indeed Burke who speaks. It was one long cavil at Shelburne for having given up anything in order to get out of a disgraceful and ruinous war. He was particularly severe on the concessions in India, though he said that Hastings' "projects of extending territorial acquisitions" had nearly ruined "our very existence." He said a great deal about the Loyalists —whom he now declared *we* had deceived. Thomas Pitt had called some of them "vipers and traitors." Burke saw no use in vilifying those whom we had shamefully abandoned. He seemed blind to the folly of thrusting the Loyalists by force on their enraged countrymen. He referred to Powis' attack on the Coalition, and declared there was "nothing heterogeneous in such an alliance," and he pointed to the Treasury Bench, where Dundas sat between Pitt and Townshend.

Dundas, who spoke next, said he was one of the first to abandon the opinion that America could be subdued. He reminded Fox that only ten months ago he had said peace was absolutely necessary—and to his knowledge was to be obtained. "Nay, so certain was he of it, that, much as he disliked the noble lord in the blue ribbon, he would even consent to negotiate for him, to act under him as a clerk, to conclude the peace."[1] Dundas went through all the Articles—he had a letter in his pocket from the Merchants of Glasgow, desiring to thank Ministers for the 4th (the recovery of debts). He told the House that a full third, if not two-thirds, of all the debts due from America were owing to Glasgow. He made some very pungent remarks on the too sudden change of tone as to the state of the Navy. Ten months ago it was most disgraceful and wretched! Had ships sprung up in the night like mushrooms?

[1] March 5, 1782. Debate on the Attorney-General's Bill to Conclude a Peace, or Truce, with America. Fox's words were: "that to save his country, he was willing to serve Ministers in the business of peace, in any capacity, even as an under commis, or messenger. *But in so doing, he desired it might be understood that he did not mean to have any connection with them; from the moment when he should make any terms with one of them he would rest satisfied to be called the most infamous of mankind; he could not for an instant think of a coalition with men, who in every public and private transaction, as ministers, had shewn themselves void of every principle of honour and honesty; in the hands of such men he would not trust his honour, even for a minute.*"

Johnstone made a violent attack on the Treaty. As for asking, Could a better have been made? he asked, Could a worse? Like Burke, he particularly blamed the East India articles. The Secretary of State (Townshend) had said that the Directors of the Company were satisfied—he was perfectly astonished at such an assertion. Every Director he had spoken to had highly disapproved those articles, and to his knowledge the bulk of the proprietors condemned them. He saw an hon. gentleman near him who could give the House information on the subject.

Sir Henry Fletcher, thus challenged, said his position was delicate—he had been the secret agent of the Company in the peace negotiations between Administration and the Directors. The East India Company was most anxious for peace, and was willing to make the necessary "concessions and restorations." He explained its liabilities. The Company had to pay an army of near 200,000 men, besides ten regiments of his Majesty's forces; to victual twenty sail of the line, and to carry on two wars with two of the most formidable powers in India. It had large debts at all its settlements, and scarcely knew where to turn for a lac of rupees. Peace was a most desirable object, and the Company approved the Treaty.

Sheridan was very angry with Dundas for attacking Fox. The Treaty was most disgraceful—it gave up everything that was glorious to this country. If it had a single article with a view to the interests of the Empire, a single article that was not a concession, he would not say it was what almost everybody pronounced it. He talked of Rodney and Gibraltar. He hinted that the part referring to Holland would prove to be a concession to France—that was why Fox asked for it, the other day, and called forth the indignation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as unprecedented and preposterous. "His years and his early political exaltation" had not allowed Pitt to look up precedents, or study the Journals of the House,—he would have found it was not unprecedented to lay a depending treaty before the House. He read an extract from the Journals about the Treaty of Utrecht, which proved that Queen Anne consulted her Commons on the Peace. He demanded to know whether Trincomalee was given up to the Dutch. He said that Great Britain was at the feet of Congress, suing in vain for the "wretched Loyalists." Dunkirk filled the measure of our disgrace—even supposing it was not of the importance it formerly was, it had been for more than a century the pride of our ancestors to enforce what we have now so rashly conceded. "It was impossible for language to describe his

reprobation of the peace." He dared Ministers to move for Fox's correspondence to be laid before the House. (Here a great cry of Move! Move!) Then he spoke of the Coalition—"if there was one," and abused Dundas for his "early desertion," and the unfairness of using recrimination.

It was a strange moment when at last Fox rose. Everyone knew that Shelburne was doomed, and that to-morrow or next day Fox and North would return to office together. What would Fox say?

He began at once to defend himself. His situation that day was peculiarly delicate—he was supposed to be acting from personal pique, and to be opposing the Treaty from "envy, jealousy, and ambition." Those who knew him best would not impute such motives to him. Former opinions of his were brought up against him. He had said some months ago that almost any peace would be good. He might as well say that everything the Minister had done, was done to embarrass himself. "How well I might ascribe the present peace to this motive! You call for peace, says the noble person, you insist on peace; then peace you shall have, but such a peace, that you shall sicken of its very name. You call for peace, and I will give you a peace that shall make you repent the longest day you live, that ever you breathed a wish for peace. I will give you a peace which shall make you and all men wish that the war had been continued, *a peace more calamitous, more dreadful, more ruinous than war could possibly be; and the effects of which neither the strength, the credit, nor the commerce of the nation shall be able to support.*[1] If this was the intention of the noble person, he has succeeded to a miracle, for *never did I more sincerely lament any advice I ever gave in my life, than the advice of getting rid of the disastrous war in which the nation was involved!*" After these astounding words, Fox hinted that Shelburne thought "his situation depended on peace"—thought there was no other way of fixing himself in a seat "not gained by the purest means, nor supported by the firmest bottom"—and perhaps he has overshot his mark!

He then denied he had ever said he had a peace in his pocket. He had said there were persons in this country empowered by Congress to treat of peace. And there were—persons properly authorised, and anxious to treat of peace. He dared Ministers

[1] British shipping, clearing outwards and inwards from her ports, had fallen, in 1782, to 615,150 tons, while there were in that year 225,456 foreign clearances . . . in 1785, the entries inwards and outwards reached 1,182,346 tons, of which only 107,484 tons were foreign vessels.—Lindsay, *Merchant Shipping*, ii. 240.

to produce the treaty he had drawn up—"they know what it is; they have it in the office."

Then he returned to the Coalition. He complained of the desertion of some of his friends. Now that the cause of the difference between North and himself was removed, why should they not unite? Why should he bear malice? When he was North's friend, he found him "open and sincere, when an enemy, honourable and manly." "*I never had any reason to say of the noble lord in the blue ribbon, that he practised any of those little subterfuges, tricks and stratagems which I found in others;* any of those behindhand and paltry manœuvres which destroy confidence between human beings." Yet not a year ago, Fox had seen North like a convicted thief, imploring the House to believe him this time—or at least, to wait and see whether he was lying when he told them the Ministry was no more. On that memorable occasion, Fox had said that Lord Surrey ought to be allowed to make his motion—"*this was the more necessary, as the House could not place any confidence in the word of the Minister; and therefore, ought not to believe upon that word, that the King's ministers were no more.*"

He returned to the Peace. He had been charged with having when in office lowered this country before the States of Holland, and that then there appeared none of those proud thoughts and high expectations he now expressed. He acknowledged that, as the Dutch were plunged into this war without a cause, he thought we ought to offer them liberal terms of peace. But those offers were rejected, and haughty demands were made—the Dutch saw us hampered with so many enemies, they thought they could procure terms to which they were not entitled. Our circumstances are not the same as then—our state is mended, our navy increased, that of the enemy diminished. The American war—the millstone that hung about our necks—is gone; we have had brilliant victories, every prospect is rich—and just at this moment "we are damned at once with a peace, which perhaps we shall never be able to recover." It was all concession—one-sided restitution. He declared upon his honour that the terms were obnoxious in the extreme.[1]

"Mr. Chancellor Pitt" then spoke. He first turned to Sheridan, whose insolent allusions to Pitt's youth were not the first of the kind that he had made. Pitt said no man admired

[1] "You have heard me say that I thought that he (Charles Fox) had no malice or rancour; I think so still and am sure of it. But I think that he has no feeling, neither, for any one but himself."—*Selwyn to Carlisle,* March 12, 1882.

that hon. gentleman more than he did—in his proper place; "the elegant sallies of his thought, his dramatic turns, his epigrammatic points," if reserved for "their proper stage," would always receive what the hon. gentleman's abilities always did receive—the plaudits of his audience, and it would be his fortune, "*sui plausu gaudere theatri.*" But this was not the proper scene to exhibit these elegancies. Then Pitt went into consideration of the Treaties with a grasp marvellous in a young man of twenty-three. He showed the absolute necessity of peace, considered even from the naval point of view. Had "gentlemen on the other side" forgotten what they said—how we must have peace on any terms, for a year, for a day, just to give us breathing-time? They said times were changed—the change was that the right hon. gentleman was no longer in place—there was no other change, and to show it, he went into the relative situation of the belligerents—their strength, their resources, their prospects—and the necessity of peace. He examined the Articles, and spoke particularly to the points complained of—the boundaries of Canada, the fishery of Newfoundland, the cession of the Floridas, the abandonment of the Loyalists. He recommended temper and moderation at such a moment. He spoke of the "unnatural alliance which it was reported had taken place"—it was undoubtedly one of the wonders of the age—"it stretched to a point of political apostasy, which not only astonished so young a man as he was, but apparently astonished and confounded the most veteran observers of the human heart." "He was excessively severe."[1]

As soon as Pitt had done, Sheridan rose to reply. Pitt had given him time to prepare one of those *impromptus-faits-à-loisir* of which he was sometimes accused. He called Pitt ungentlemanly, talked about taste and propriety, and by way of showing his own taste, said that if he ever wrote another composition of the kind the right hon. gentleman had alluded to, he would see if he could not improve on one of Ben Jonson's best characters—the Angry Boy, in the *Alchemist*![2] Pitt deserved some of his

[1] *Parliamentary History.*

[2] "If Pitt had pronounced this Animadversion . . . at the Close, not at the Commencement of his Discourse, and had instantly sat down, probably even Sheridan would have found himself unequal to replying on the Instant. But the Length of Time that he remained on his Legs, gave his Opponent Leisure for meditating a proper Answer. Ordinary Individuals would have sunk under the Reproof, or would have displayed more resentment than Wit. . . . The Reference to his theatrical Occupations was no Doubt illiberal, as well as calculated to oppress any, except a Man constituted like Sheridan. . . . The Admiration excited by a Repartee so keen and so prompt, cannot easily be

reproaches, but Sheridan brought the rebuff on himself by his constant sneers at Pitt's youth—sneers obviously indulged in as the cheapest way of answering his arguments, for at twenty-three Pitt was strangely mature—there was nothing juvenile about him but the number of his years. His character inspired as much respect as his abilities, and Wraxall is not ashamed to speak of him with something like reverence. It is seldom that a very young man of remarkable powers impresses his contemporaries even more by his moral than his intellectual superiority. Everybody was reminding everybody else of what he had said before, and of how he was eating his own words, and no man could deny the charge—all he could say was that he was now in a forgiving frame of mind, and that his former enemy had become so much wiser through his former mistakes, that it would be quite wicked not to allow him to help save the country this time.

John Lee, a "young member," declared upon his honour that the Peace beggared all the treaties ever made, in infamy and disgrace. Even the cession of territory was as nothing to the "cession of men into the hands of their enemies"—men who had trusted to our "fair promises and deceitful words." As for the Coalition, he knew nothing about it—he was not in the House "while the noble lord was pursuing his system for the reduction of America," but he reprobated that system as much as any man —but was it a reason why he should be his enemy? He always respected the noble lord's private character, and believed him to be honest and manly in his dealings—and if his character had not been pure indeed, he would not have had so many friends when out of office. He had seen in him "none of that shuffling, left-handed dealing, which made him the determined enemy of another noble person." If he was to decide between the noble lord and Lord Shelburne, he could not hesitate one moment to prefer "openness to concealment, honesty to artifice." He then abused Shelburne and "his system." He had gained his situation by dishonest means, had neither shown faith to his colleagues, nor gratitude to the men who brought him into office, all his dealings were marked by "low cunning and jesuitical hypocrisy." Every man who voted for the Peace would be "damned in his character." Lord Frederick Campbell "took fire" at this, and said he had come down to the House unbiassed—he meant to vote for the Address, and he would not hear his character questioned. The Attorney-General (Kenyon) was also very angry

conceived. Pitt never returned a second Time to the Charge, mounted on the same Horse."—WRAXALL, iii. 274, 275.

with Lee. Lee explained—he did not mean those who merely approved, but those who voted the Peace to be honourable. The whole disgraceful exhibition came to an end at half-past seven in the morning, when the Amendment was carried by a majority of 16. The numbers were 224 to 208, and of the 224, Lord North's share was computed at from 160 to 170.[1] It was a Tory victory.

[1] Wyndham Grenville to Lord Temple, February 19, 1783.

CHAPTER CXXIV

THE CENSURE ON THE PEACE

"I now come to take notice of the most heinous charge of all. I am accused of having formed a junction with a noble person, whose principles I have been in the habit of opposing for the last seven years of my life. I do not think it at all incumbent upon me to make any answer to this charge: first, because I do not think that the persons who have asked the question, have any right to make the enquiry; and secondly, because if any such junction was formed, I see no ground for arraignment in the matter. That any such alliance has taken place, I can by no means aver. That I shall have the honour of concurring with the noble lord on the present question is very certain. . . . It is neither wise nor noble to keep up animosities for ever. It is neither just nor candid to keep up animosity when the cause of it is no more. It is not my nature to bear malice, or to live in ill-will. My friendships are perpetual, my enmities are not so. 'Amicitiæ sempiternæ, inimiciæ placabiles.' . . . The noble lord has profited by fatal experience."—*Fox on the Preliminary Articles of Peace*, Feb. 17, 1783.

"I have already said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer excited admiration by his speech in defence of the peace. There was indeed throughout the whole of that most eloquent address, a pathos, an emotion, and an animation, of which, even in *Him*, I hardly ever witnessed any similar exhibition, while I sate in Parliament. . . . Over Fox and Lord North, Pitt seemed to assume a moral superiority; and if I may so express myself, to look down upon them from the eminence on which he stood;—not the eminence of Power, or of Office, but of conscious Rectitude, untainted with Party Spirit, and disdaining to sacrifice Principle for Place. . . . I will fairly confess, that though I voted against Ministers on that Night, yet Mr. Pitt never appeared in my Eyes, an Object of more just Admiration, than when on the Point of laying down his Power. Such, I believe, to have been the Sentiment universally felt, not less by his Opponents, than by his Supporters."—Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs*, iii. 314, 318, 319, 324. (On the Debate of Feb. 21, 1783.)

THE study of the negotiations with America must convince everyone that we obtained the general peace of 1783 with the greatest difficulty. Those negotiations bristle with boundary questions deeply concerning France and Spain. Even if America had been allowed to drop out tacitly, and the war had been continued only in Europe, between ourselves on one side, and France, Spain and Holland on the other, our position would have been frightful. It is no reply to say that twenty-five years later we held our own against Napoleon when he dominated all Europe. The case is

utterly different. Europe acted only on compulsion; Great Britain was then defending national liberty against a conqueror, and the moral sense of all Europe was on our side. In 1783 it was as completely against us. We should have had no sympathiser in our attempts to wrest better terms from France and Spain—on the contrary, we had made ourselves so many enemies by our "empire of the seas," that almost every Power in Europe would have rejoiced at our further discomfiture.

Shelburne was heavily handicapped in argument. Those who attacked his Peace brought down the plaudits of a House still packed with "King's Friends," by dilating on the past glory of Britain, the victories of Rodney, the spirit of the nation, its inexhaustible resources, the shame of yielding to the insolent demands of our adversaries. National pride and arrogance, just lifting up its head again after so many years of humiliation, fought against Shelburne; and he could only reply with poor-spirited arguments about expense, taxes, and — more degrading still — reminders that we could not fight at these odds without an ally. Such arguments sound dull and feeble when drowned by the music of "Rule Britannia." The defenders of the Peace had the invidious task of telling a boastful people that it had better put its pride in its pocket. Those who attacked it, pointed to Rodney, enthroned as conqueror on the deck of the *Formidable*, looking up at the great *Ville de Paris* towering above him, as they told the excited House that we could defy the world in arms. And while it is certain that the majority of the nation, and all the trading part of it, was sick of the American war, and would in no circumstances have endured its renewal, war with France and Spain would have been by no means so unpopular. War with France seemed to most Englishmen in those days one of the laws of Nature. Added to all this, Shelburne had raised up a host of enemies by his economical reforms, and North's supporters doubtless hoped that a coalition would neutralise these disastrous tendencies in Fox's party. North had everything to gain and nothing to lose by a Coalition — except the King's favour, and that could only be regained by North himself returning to power, and renewing the old struggle under the discouragement of the American fiasco. In joining Fox, he obtained an act of oblivion for himself and his party. His great accuser was henceforth on his side.

It was perfectly true that Shelburne was determined to make peace at all cost—even at the cost of his own political future. He was fully aware that this would probably be the result. He knew

that our successes at Martinique and Gibraltar had reawakened the war-spirit, quenched for an instant by Yorktown. As soon as the vote of the Commons was known, there were rumours that he would dissolve Parliament. Many advised it. But it would have been dangerous to the Peace—which was not popular. The Whig pamphleteers had been pouring out their pamphlets; and though the rumours of a coalition between Fox and North staggered many, it was still possible to refuse to believe it. It was much easier to denounce a bad peace than it had been to denounce a bad war—the enlarged self-love and self-conceit which masquerades in all countries under the sacred name of patriotism, is the cheapest of all appeals to a people. The Peace was not yet finally signed. The risk of the new Parliament being returned on the issue of the Peace was too great—almost certainly it would mean the renewal of the war. Shelburne saw that the only way to save the Peace was by a scapegoat. He offered himself as that scapegoat. On the 20th, Grafton, who always deserted betimes, had resigned on a trivial pretext. The same day Camden had a long interview with Shelburne, and advised him to retire at once —the personal dislike against him was too strong for him to stand against it; but if he retired now, it would be "with credit, and the approbation of the world; for whatever the arts and powers of the united parties had expressed by votes in Parliament, still the nation felt themselves obliged to him for having put an end to such a war, by a peace which exceeded the expectations of all moderate, fair-judging men." Camden further advised Shelburne to advise the King to send for Portland—or, if he did not himself resign, to try to coalesce with North. Shelburne next saw Pitt. The Amendment was not a direct Censure. It was resolved that they should await the debate on the motion Cavendish was about to move—if Pitt saw that the result must be adverse, Pitt was to announce Shelburne's resignation.

This decision seems to have been considerably influenced by Shelburne's belief that the King had been playing him false—in the hope of restoring North—and now regretted it, as he saw that Fox must be restored with him. A few votes would turn the scale. It was a suspicious circumstance that, in the division on the Address, Jenkinson, who voted for Ministers, was not followed by all the members "who were supposed to know his real mind," and the members of the Household, it was supposed with the consent of the King, had expressed disapprobation of the Peace.[1]

[1] Grafton's *Memoirs*; Walpole, *Last Journals*, ii. 586, 587; Nicholls' *Recollections*, i. 51.

Shelburne's suspicions of the King were increased by a letter he received the same day (February 21) from Mr. Orde, Secretary to the Treasury. It was a significant letter. It told Shelburne that Orde had just had a conversation with Mr. Hatsell, Clerk of the House of Commons, to whom he had gone for information on Monday's division. Hatsell said it was his own "firm belief, that the question of stability or downfall to your Administration depends solely (as your Lordship has always said) upon the *Highest.* It is not the difference of the peace. It is his will." Hatsell showed how easy it would be for the King to stop North's opposition—the King could do anything with North's father, Lord Guildford, and Guildford could do anything with his son. It was only necessary to represent to the King that the matter solely depended upon him—if he wished to continue this Government, he had only to speak "to Lord Guildford and to such others, as will be moved by the certainty of his interference; such as Sir George Osborne, etc., etc."; Shelburne should tell the King that all depended on him; "experience had formerly shown, that nothing less than the King's earnest co-operation and immediate address would do. If he declines this, it should be taken as an infallible evidence of his *indifference*, at least, about the event, and of course your Lordship would consider whether it would be confortable, creditable, or safe, to continue efforts in his service under such disadvantage." Orde added that this opinion coincided with his own.

The King loudly protested friendship, but Shelburne's suspicions were not removed. He knew the King too well, and was convinced that George III was, as usual, playing a double game. Others, however, had doubted it[1]—the King's abhorrence of Fox was such that it is strange he abandoned Shelburne. But in justice to the King, it should be remembered that the prospects of "King's Friends" were no longer what they had been, and no doubt a good deal of honest and "independent" personal dislike to the man who meant to rob them of their perquisites influenced the votes on the Peace. They did, however, give Shelburne a chance—they sent to ask the price of their support. They suggested that it was customary for a Minister at the crisis of his fate to "let the mutes of the ministerial members"—the rank and file of "the flock"—know what they might expect by way

[1] Nicholls thought the King "could not refrain from employing his household troops to affront Lord Shelburne," but yet is of opinion that he did not wish Shelburne to resign. The "household troops" are the officers of the King's Household, all of whom were in Parliament.

of the usual douceur on an occasion of such importance. This reminder of the good old times of the "Minister's pocket-book" was taken very ill by Shelburne—he sent them word that if his peace could not obtain the unbought approbation of the House, it must take its chance.[1] Possibly when Horace Walpole wrote that Shelburne did not understand mankind, he was thinking of this. Burke had once alarmed Conway by his remarks on the shifts to which an Administration might be driven, if not properly supported —it must, said Burke, either bribe or resign. The alternative came to Shelburne; he declined to bribe.

Three days had done more than three weeks. Although it had been "not strictly true" on the 17th of February, that the Commons had seriously considered the Treaties (which had lain three weeks on their table, and had been mentioned in almost every debate during that interval), on the 21st they were prepared to censure them. This was to be done "in the lump," without even calling for papers. This seemed indecent, even to Walpole. "Such a gross indecorum," he says, "was perhaps occasioned by the desire of saving Lord North from any retrospect, the neglect of which they could not justify if they went into articles against Lord Shelburne."[2] That is, they brought vague and undefined general accusations against Shelburne, because if they had entered into particulars against him they invited a crushing counter accusation against their new ally.

Cavendish moved Five Resolutions,[3] the sting of which was in the Fourth. It declared, that greater concessions have been made to the enemies of this country than they had any right to expect. It was a direct Censure.

Cavendish's speech was a reiteration of all that had already been said. After our glorious victory in the West Indies, and the equally glorious defeat of the tremendous attack on Gibraltar, our superiority in the East Indies, our resources, "and many other considerations," we were entitled to a more honourable peace. Peace was undoubtedly a desirable object—the necessities of the

[1] Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, iii. 363. Rutt's *Life of Priestley*, i. 206, note, where this story is told on the authority of Dr. Priestley. Priestley lived for several years in Shelburne's house, and then and afterwards received from him a salary, to enable him to carry on his scientific experiments.

[2] *Last Journals*, ii. 587.

[3] The First declared the intention of the House to preserve the public faith, by supporting his Majesty in conducting the peace "definitely." The Second promised to try to improve the blessings of peace. The Third approved of the acknowledgment of Independence. The Fifth expressed the hope that the Loyalists would be provided for.

State, trade, manufacture, all cried aloud for it—but this does not justify Ministers in accepting terms so degrading and disgraceful as those on the table. After all, if our finance is decayed, our enemies' is decayed too! They are quite as badly off as we are. Spain is exhausted, America can't hurt us now we have given up trying to subjugate her. France is equally, if not more "decayed" than we are. Admiral Pigot has got forty ships in the West Indies, and we can use the troops that were employed in America. To speak mildly, the Peace was concluded rather in a hurry, and so concessions were made which cooler reflection would have prevented. He disclaimed heaping criminal censure on the persons directing the negotiations—though it had been insinuated that some of them were influenced by a desire to continue in power. But then there were others of whom Cavendish entertained so high an opinion—especially of his friend Mr. Townshend—that he could not bring himself to believe they had done anything they did not at the moment think necessary—with a sneer at Shelburne's "liberality." Cavendish had thought of asking for papers, but as no criminal proceeding was intended against Ministers, and as he did not condemn the Peace in order to censure Ministers, and his only object was to show that they deserved no compliment from Parliament, or the nation, he thought papers unnecessary.

St. Andrew St. John again seconded him. He was less charitable. "He threw out strong suspicions" of Shelburne, and reminded the House how the Commons had behaved about the Treaty of Utrecht—"to prove there was no getting rid of a peace that had been once concluded by the royal prerogative; the only redress for the most dishonourable peace was the punishment of the Ministers who made it." The nation, enraged at the Treaty of Utrecht, did punish those who made it—one Minister was sent to the Tower, and another went into voluntary banishment. Commodore Keith Stuart[1] (who was at the relief of Gibraltar) led off the defence. He told the House that whatever might be the services performed by Lord Howe and Lord Rodney, and "whatever might be the *éclat* of the siege of Gibraltar, and the relief effected in the face of a superior fleet," we were not in a position that entitled Ministers to act up to the wishes of gentlemen on the other side of the House. "Nor had we that decided superiority in the West Indies—if we had it for some time, we could not maintain it long; he had it from the first authority that if this peace had not taken effect, at least sixty ships of the line were rendezvousing at Cadiz to reduce Jamaica." He warned the House

[1] Keith Stuart was Lady Gower's brother.

not to build on the dissensions in Holland—"they are wearing away apace"; and Holland, "roused at length from her lethargy, her active coalition with the House of Bourbon will indisputably sink us under the power of such a monstrous confederacy"—the Dutch can undoubtedly furnish twenty-five ships for the next campaign.

On the Fourth Resolution being put, Powis made a strong and sensible speech, showing the inconsistency of such a motion, after all the professions as to the absolute necessity of peace. In particular he expressed his astonishment should Fox rise to support it. Before that hon. gentleman came into power, he had told the House we must have peace; after he came in, he told us he found things much worse than he had painted them, and that almost any peace was acceptable. The plain meaning of the question was, not whether the peace deserved praise or blame, but to remove the present Administration. As for the First Lord of the Treasury, the vote of Monday was a pretty broad hint to him. He therefore cautioned the House against being drawn into a vote which might be of the most pernicious consequence to the country. Perhaps what passed on Monday might not do much harm abroad, or stop France from disarming. If it did, we should see all our late enemies keeping up an armed neutrality, and must keep up our own war establishments. If the peace was bad, let the House look to the cause of it—the noble lord in the blue ribbon. He plunged us in the war, and compelled us to accept this peace, "such as it was." The ill-timed lenity of the present Ministry allowed the noble lord to enjoy his present situation. Had the enquiries which were once talked of been made, we should not have seen this extraordinary and unnatural coalition. Last summer, there was something like sterling principle in party. He advised his noble friend who made the motion to recollect, that though some alloy might be necessary to make political coin sufficiently durable for circulation, care ought to be taken not to debase it entirely!

Cavendish was very angry at Powis' remark on the "unnatural alliance." The country needed all its great men to unite and save it, and it gave him great comfort that he had been able to effect such a union. Fox said openly that the Coalition was a coalition against Shelburne. He complained bitterly of "the forfeiture of friendship"—"I am deserted this evening by those whom I thought never to have given a pretence for losing their estimation." He said it was necessary to desert Shelburne, who had betrayed every principle on which their confidence was founded —but he forgot to say on what principle his adherence to North

was founded. Finally, he confessed his desire for office—he hoped it could not be called presumption. He then denied the statements of Keith Stuart, and hinted that they originated from those who were under the strongest obligations to Keppel, but now were endeavouring to depreciate him. He then came to the treaty itself.

Two principles direct every negotiation—the *uti possidetis*, and reciprocal and general restitution; the last is when the belligerents have equal reason for ending the war—the former, when either is the conqueror. "It is then the vanquished are obliged to submit to the loss of their possessions." They buy peace with what their enemy has taken, because they cannot go on with war. But here we have all the dishonour of the *uti possidetis* against us, and all the disadvantages of partial, not reciprocal, restitution. France keeps what she has taken from us, and receives a general restitution of all we have taken from her. Never was a peace so negligently and disgracfully concluded. Nothing can account for it so clearly as a retrospect on the Minister's conduct. Our enemies knew he had not that support and confidence necessary to invigorate the arm of war against them. It is thus that we learn the foreign character and estimation of the Minister—the preliminaries are "a foreign lesson to teach us caution." Fox then pronounced Rockingham's eulogium—"he took power, not for plunder, but for preserving and promoting the properties and privileges of the people." He then noticed what had been said as to the vote of last Tuesday morning causing the Ambassadors now in town to delay the conclusion of the Treaty—it is said they think the House does not mean to fulfil the Articles, and that we have only meant this negotiation as a cessation of hostilities. Would it not be more true to say, they fear Administration will not possess long enough the power of completing the negotiations? And is it not wise in them to wait till they see an Administration firmly established?

He returned to the Coalition, calling it a coalition of every party *that wished to destroy the party which has been so destructive to the country.* Why censure our acceptance of the noble lord's support? True, there was a period when I disapproved his conduct, *but the cause of my disapprobation is now removed. America is independent.* "*The cause of disunion no longer subsists.*" Yet one of the chief charges brought by Fox against Shelburne, was that Independence was *not* made secure! He went on about the privileges of the people. "We have a Minister who is in his nature, habitudes and principles, an enemy to the privileges of the people—he is unsupported by every friend of the constitution—I

believe there is hardly a man in this House who would give his unbiassed support to the present premier." Who would support a man who has trifled away the interests of the country, and made concessions in every part of the globe, without any pretence of equivalent? If the King by his prerogative possessed the power of appointing a Minister, the people by their privilege can annul that appointment. Only coalition can restore the abused confidence of the people—*we* shall regain their confidence. The obnoxious part of Administration must go. We must forget private resentments when the state of the nation calls for unanimity. We may see what the condition of the country must be when it can unite men of such different descriptions as myself and the noble lord! "*By this I mean not the least reflection on the principles of the noble lord, but rather the sentiments that so long occasioned that war which has ended so unhappily.* But this is past, and I trust the consequence of the coalition will be the salvation of the country."[1] A coalition with the Minister most entirely subservient to the will of the King of all Ministers known to English History since Strafford!

Pitt spoke next. He referred to the breach between him and Fox—but "I will never engage in public enmities without a public cause." He then remarked on the language used by Opposition on the Address—that the House had not had time to examine the Treaty.[2] Now, two days after, we are ready to pass a censure on what we declare we have not had leisure to discuss. Pitt began his defence of the Treaty with the state of the Navy, and referring for proof to the papers on the table, directly charged Keppel with having "varied in his statements to the cabinet, no less than 20 sail of the line." We are told from the papers before us, that the British force amounted to nearly one hundred sail of the line. Many of these have been long and actively employed on foreign stations. With diligent exertions, we can have six new ships in March. The force of France and Spain is nearly 140 sail of the line—60 lying in Cadiz harbour, stored and victualled for immediate service. Twelve ships of the line—including one

[1] "Fox's speech, though it displayed admirable ability . . . as well as prodigious information . . . yet wanted, as I thought, that triumphant spirit which commonly animated his eloquence . . . he had sacrificed, if not public principle, at least, public opinion, to gratify his ambition. When he looked round him, many vacancies were visible on the Opposition Benches; where, in place of his former friends, he now saw only the adherents of Lord North, so lately his bitterest adversaries."—WRAXALL.

[2] "The Treaties had then been nearly three weeks on the table, and scarcely a day had passed in which, somehow or other, they had not been brought into debate."—*Secretary Townshend's Speech*, on February 17.

newly built by the United States, left Boston harbour under Vaudreuil, in perfect repair. An immense land armament is collected at St. Domingo. These forces were united in one object —the reduction of Jamaica. Who can suppose that island could have resisted an attack by 72 sail of the line? Pigot, even with his reinforcement from Europe, would have had only 46 sail. Could he have recaptured Grenada, Dominica, St Kitt's, Nevis, and Montserrat? Would not a new campaign have ended but too probably in the loss of Jamaica—the last of our possessions in the West Indies?

In the East Indies, the success of Sir Edward Hughes had not prevented the enemy from landing a larger European force than we actually possess in India—which is at this instant in conjunction with Hyder, wasting the Carnatic.

In the Channel, the French will have thirteen new sail of the line, and the Dutch force (as accurately stated by Commodore Stuart) will be twenty-five. We do not know what accession the Spanish fleet will have received—it is enough to know that France, Spain, and Holland would have doubled ours in our own seas. "What were the feelings of everyone who hears me (what were my own feelings it is impossible to describe) when that great man Lord Howe set sail with our only fleet!"

As for the Army, it is notorious to every gentleman that hears me, that new levies "could scarcely be torn, on any terms, from this depopulated country." Three thousand men were the utmost that could have been safely sent away on any offensive duty. We are told the troops from New York would have supplied our need. But we have no power to use the foreign troops there on any other than American service—nor have any transports been prepared (Fox had said they were all ready), and they must have embarked "into the hazard of the enemy's fleet." Here he paused to say that he was making no revelations of secrets of State—this is known throughout the nation. We have an unfunded debt of thirty millions, and the taxes that have been tried, instead of bringing in a revenue, have often spoiled others which did. The hon. gentleman says that other nations would have felt equal distress. Does he contemplate national bankruptcy? Only last Monday he said that even this peace was better than the continuance of the war. Was this peace concluded with the same levity with which it is condemned? Many days and nights were laboriously spent by his Majesty's Ministers in such extensive negotiations—consultations were held with persons the best informed on the respective subjects —many doubts were well weighed, and removed; "weeks and

months of solemn discussion gave birth to that peace which we are required to destroy without examination"—that peace, the positive ultimatum from France, "to which I solemnly assure the public there was no alternative but a continuance of the war." Are these articles seriously compared with the peace of Paris? Then he alluded to his father—"I was taught, Sir, by one whose memory I shall ever revere, that at the close of a war, far different from this, Great Britain dictated terms of peace to submissive nations. But that era is past—she is under the awful necessity of employing language that corresponds with her true condition; the visions of her power and pre-eminence are passed away."

He then set out the account between us and our adversaries.

We have granted independence—"That, Sir, was a needless form;" the events of war, and even a vote of this House, had already granted what it was impossible to withhold.

We have ceded Florida—We have obtained Providence and the Bahamas.

We have ceded an extent of fishery in Newfoundland—We have established an exclusive right to the most valuable banks.

We have restored Sta. Lucia and given up Tobago—We have regained Grenada, Dominica, St. Kitt's, Nevis, Montserrat, and have rescued Jamaica from danger.

In Africa we have given up Goree, the grave of our countrymen, and have kept Senegambia, the best and most healthy settlement.

In Europe, we have given up Minorca—kept up at an immense expense in peace, and never tenable in war.

We have permitted the repair of the harbour of Dunkirk. "The humiliating clause, Sir, for its destruction was inserted after other wars than the past." But Dunkirk was first an object of jealousy when ships were of far less burden than now—no art nor expense will enable Dunkirk to receive a fleet of the line.

In the East Indies, we have restored what was useless to ourselves, and scarcely tenable if the war continued.

"But we have abandoned the loyalists to their implacable enemies." Little, Sir, are those unhappy men befriended by such language in this House. Would a continuance of the war have been justifiable simply to assist them? Their hopes would have been rendered desperate.

He then spoke of coalition. "The public safety is this day risked by the malice and disappointment of faction." The hon. gentleman who spoke last says, "Because he is prevented from prosecuting the noble lord in the blue ribbon to the satisfaction of

public justice, he will heartily embrace him as his friend." With the same spirit, sir, I suppose he will cherish this peace because he abhors it. But I do not hesitate to say "from the obvious complexion of his debate," that its real object is to force the Earl of Shelburne from the Treasury, rather than any real conviction that Ministers deserve censure for the concessions they have made —concessions absolutely necessary, and imputable to the Government of which the noble lord in the blue ribbon was a member. Pitt then expressed his high regard for Shelburne. But he did not wish to see him retained in power against the public approbation—if his removal can be "innocently effected, and if he can be compelled to resign without entailing all those mischiefs which seem to be involved in the resolution now moved," I am persuaded he will retire. I know him well. Dismiss him when you please, he has a title to the "transcendant consolation" of having contributed to the public advantage. He has earned it dearly. But nothing can be a stronger proof that his enemies are eager to traduce him, than the frivolous grounds on which they accuse him. An action which reflects lustre on him has been improved into a fault. A right hon. gentleman, who has exhausted his strength in the service of the State, owes to the interference of the noble earl a pension which is no extraordinary compensation for the public spirit which has uniformly marked his parliamentary conduct. Surely the virtues and abilities of this veteran soldier and respectable senator deserved some acknowledgment from the community they served. Surely his age entitled him to a little repose. Surely humanity to neglected merit ought not to incur censure. "I repeat, sir, it is the Earl of Shelburne whom the movers of this question wish to wound. This is the aim of the unnatural coalition. But if this ill-omened marriage is not already solemnized, I know a just and lawful impediment, and in the name of the public safety, I here forbid the banns!"

"For my own share in this censure—I was not very eager to come in, and I shall have no great reluctance to go out, whenever the public dismisses me. . . . I can say with sincerity, I never had a wish that did not terminate in the dearest interests of the nation." I shall not, like the hon. gentleman, "erect a fortress and a refuge for disappointed ambition,"—as has been predicted of me. Lastly, "whatever appears dishonourable or inadequate in the peace on your table, is strictly chargeable to the noble lord in the blue ribbon, whose profusion of the public money, whose notorious temerity and obstinacy in prosecuting the war, and whose utter incapacity, rendered peace of any description indispensable for the

preservation of the state. I look to the independent part of the House, and to the public at large, for acquittal. It has been my sole concern to act an upright part. My earliest impressions were in favour of the noblest and most disinterested modes of serving the public. . . . I will cherish them as a legacy infinitely more valuable than the greatest inheritance."

Pitt was here throwing out a broad hint that if the peace were saved Shelburne would resign.

Sir Cecil Wray (one of the friends to whom Fox had referred) made a remarkably blunt and unvarnished speech, warning Fox that he had burnt his fingers once by an imprudent connection, and would burn them again. And then North rose. He said it was no small presumption of his innocence that he could hear Pitt's words (he called them "thunder") without dismay—even with astonishment and delight. He begged them all to observe that he never abandoned, in a single instance, *either his character, or his connections, or his political principles*—he was ready to meet the most scrupulous enquiry into the minutest action of his life. He had asserted the honour of the British Empire. There was nothing in the Coalition that surprised him. As for the measures he had carried out, the noble lord who moved the censure thought them unwise, impolitic and injudicious—"I can only say and lament that they were extremely unfortunate." However proper they then appeared to many wise and able statesmen, *as well as to myself*, it cannot be denied now that their consequences to this country are extremely calamitous.

He then expressed his joy that the animosity of Cavendish and Fox towards himself was now at an end. "That hon. gentleman undoubtedly ran me hard"— he thought himself right, "and I was not willing, *while unconvinced*, to acknowledge myself wrong." "I have been vilified, and grossly reprobated," and made the butt of his inexhaustible powers of ridicule and asperity, "*but it does not occur to my recollection that he ever charged me with the direct want of integrity.*" And North very handsomely admitted that for his part he had always found the hon. gentleman "open, manly, and sincere." His temper is warm, but his nature is generous. As an enemy, I always found him formidable, and a person of most extraordinary talents whatever Minister he opposes. But in proportion as I had reason to dread him, *while his principles were adverse to mine*, now they are congenial, we shall unite with one mind and one heart in the cause of our country!

He then enlarged on the difficulty Congress found in raising money—most of the States had refused to pay the tax levied for the

service of the war—the Rhode Islanders drove the tax-collectors away. So if we had stood firm, "the poor loyalists had not been so utterly abandoned." Even the Treaty of Utrecht was not as disadvantageous as this. The article of Dunkirk will be a lasting monument of this country's disgrace.

Townshend (after saying that there was good reason to fear that another campaign might have resulted in the loss of Quebec) explained the situation of the foreign troops. As subjects of a foreign prince, we could not employ the Hessians on any service but that for which we hired them. Another part were Provincial troops—these two descriptions of forces being taken away, left the number very few which were English.

Sir Henry Clinton and others were consulted as to the weakening of the garrison of New York—they were all against it. Gentlemen might remember that Sir Henry would not spare a man to the fleet, when it was off New York.

Fox confessed that he ought, when a part of Administration, to have applied to the Landgrave for an extension of power to employ the foreign troops—but even then the same number must have been found to supply their places.

Thomas Pitt said he had never felt so much uneasiness at parliamentary conduct as to-day. "The House had heard a direct avowal of the deepest system of party, ever acknowledged within those walls"—at a moment when the country was "gasping for her existence, men of the first ability were engaged in an open struggle for power."

Wilmot pointed out that Article VI of the Treaty with America secured the loyalists still in America from further prosecution or confiscation. Surely this was something? He would ask the House what the consequences would have been if, "according to the plan of one hon. gentleman," America had been declared independent by Act of Parliament? Would not all these persons have been at the absolute disposal of their enemies? Or will it be said that because perhaps those who did not leave the country and come over here for protection, had not so much merit as those who stayed and fought for us, their interests were not to be attended to? As for those who bore arms for us, if we had waited till they were reinstated we must have gone to war to all eternity. We must compensate the others—and perhaps they will be as well off as if they received back a ruined estate, or American paper currency! A few weeks ago every man in this nation would have jumped for joy to have got peace even on worse terms. *The noble lord in the blue*

ribbon told us we could not expect an honourable or advantageous peace. This was not a war for glory or conquest—the last four years we have been fighting for our existence. Peace was necessary. *Even victory only protracted our ruin.* Rodney's most splendid victory only saved Jamaica for that campaign.

At half-past three in the morning Cavendish's Fourth Resolution was put, and was carried by a majority of 17. (207 to 190.)

CHAPTER CXXV

FOX AND NORTH

"Thus, by this junction, Lord North got himself whitewashed by his bitterest enemies."—WALPOLE.

"But the overthrow of parties is nothing to the overthrow of systems relative to English commerce, which was intended to be placed on a footing that would have been an example to all mankind, and probably have restored England to her pinnacle again. . . . But however the ministry shall finally arrange itself, I cannot but hope on all hands that we shall be more or less cured of our fighting and monopolizing notions, and look to an American *friendship*. The boldness of my friend's conduct, therefore, has done infinite service to men's minds, as his conversation has done to the royal mind. You will take pleasure in hearing that he talked of making England a free port, for which he said we were fitted by nature, capital, love of enterprise, maritime connections, and position between the old and new world, the north and south of Europe, and that those who were best circumstanced for trade could not but be gainers by having their trade open."—*Vaughan to Franklin*, Feb. 25, 1783.

No severer condemnation can be passed upon the Vote of Censure than the description of its consequence, as given in a note to the *Parliamentary History*. "There followed a ministerial interregnum which lasted till the beginning of April; during which time the kingdom remained in a state of great disorder; without any responsible government at home, the finances neglected, the military establishments unreduced, *and the negotiations with foreign powers, which the critical conjuncture of affairs rendered peculiarly important, entirely at a stand.*"

Never, perhaps, were the interests of the country so completely sacrificed to party interests, as when the makers of the American war joined with the opposers of that war to wreck a peace made by a political enemy. The result was chaos. "Thus were all parties," says Walpole, "so jumbled and so prostituted, that no shadow of principles remained in any party; nor could any man say which faction was Whig or Tory."[1]

[1] Yet Walpole, so merciless to Shelburne, says of Fox, even now, "I do not believe that he had one black or loose object—it is a pity that he was so inattentive to having a good one. He acted as the moment impelled him." I impelled him so far, that he did not go to Newmarket in March. (See Selwyn.)

The Vote of Censure passed early on the morning of February 22nd. On the 23rd Shelburne called a Cabinet meeting, and that evening he saw a larger assembly of his friends. To both meetings he announced his intention to resign. He did so on the 24th, recommending the King to send for Pitt. That same day the King offered Pitt the Treasury, *with carte blanche*.[1] Pitt might have been Prime Minister of England at twenty-three. He took two days to consider, and then declined to supplant Shelburne. He told the King that, "Nothing less than" a moral certainty of a majority in the House of Commons "could make him undertake the task; for that it would be dishonourable not to succeed if attempted." He consented to remain provisionally at the Exchequer.

Shelburne's resignation took his enemies by surprise. Speaking of it, Wraxall says: "All these political Speculations were suddenly overturned by Lord Shelburne's immediate Resignation. Without waiting for any broader Hint, or trying by any Exertions to perpetuate his Possession of Power, he retired from the Ministry, as so many of his Predecessors had done during the present Reign. There has always appeared to be something mysterious or unexplained, in the Motives which impelled him thus precipitately, if not prematurely, to abandon a Situation which he had attained with so much Labour, as well as Address, and from which he can scarcely be said to have been driven. So singular a Fact was variously explained or interpreted at the Time. As even his Opponents neither attributed to him Want of Ambition, nor any Defect of Firmness, it became requisite to discover and assign other Reasons for his Conduct. Reports injurious to his political Reputation were industriously disseminated by his Enemies; which from the systematic Hostility exhibited in their Diffusion, I believe to have been without Foundation."[2]

Wraxall refers to the accusation put about when everything depended on vilifying Shelburne, that just before the Peace was published, he "purchased into the Funds." It was Wraxall's final and deliberate opinion, many years later—and many years after the death of the Marquis of Lansdowne—that the charge was altogether calumnious.[3] It is easily explained by the fact that he had successfully circumvented the speculators, and thereby incurred their resentment. In any case, these charges

[1] "Every argument I could think of I employed to actuate Mr. Pitt to take the step . . ."—*The King to Lord Shelburne.*

[2] Wraxall, iii. 331, 332.

[3] Wraxall, *Posthumous Memoirs*, i.

refer to December, 1782, and January, 1783, and therefore cannot justify the insults heaped upon Shelburne in July, 1782.

How can the attacks on Lord Shelburne appear anything but dishonest attempts to ruin a rival, when we consider the attitude of the Rockinghams to North? North was allowed to stand up in his place and say that Fox had never brought a direct charge against his honour, when every man there had heard Fox charge North with "an act of public perfidy—a breach of a solemn and specific promise." In March, 1780, they had heard Fox tell North he had made "a corrupt bargain with an evil design — to bring in his creatures and dependents." On more recent occasions he had told him that he first cheated himself, and then cheated the public. Only one year before (February 22, 1782) Fox had said he should think himself the most infamous of mankind if he made terms with one of the Ministers, who in every public and private transaction had shown themselves void of every principle of honour or honesty; in the hands of such men he would not trust his own honour, even for a minute. Burke had accused North of "systematic cheating"—"the noble lord deals in cheats and delusion—they are the daily traffic of his invention." He would use a cheat to serve his turn for a week—"a week? for a day! for an hour!" Of the saltpetre contract, Burke said that it could never have been done if North had not consented. "In which case, I say he has cheated the public!"[1] (February 1, 1782.) For Fox and Burke to profess that their consciences forbade them to unite with Shelburne, and then to unite with North, was to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.[2]

The after conduct of those Whigs who drove Shelburne from office, on the pretext that he had made an unfavourable peace—in circumstances which they had always foretold would be unfavourable — makes it impossible to believe that they were actuated by principle. The Duke of Portland, the figure-head of the Coalition, became twenty-four years afterwards the figure-head of the most Tory of all Tory Administrations—by a strange

[1] If he did not see it now, Burke saw later the danger of uniting with those whose principles are not ours. In October, 1790, he wrote to Dupont in Paris: "Designing men never separate their plans from their interests, and if you assist them in their schemes, you will find the pretended good in the end thrown aside or perverted, and the interested object alone compassed, and that perhaps by your means."

[2] On the 8th of February, 1780, when Lord George Gordon said that North had made Burke a "cat's paw," Burke retorted that he did not think the Minister would ever think of taking him by the paw.

coincidence, also the Administration which drifted us into a second war with America! In six short months after protesting that honour and conscience forbade his remaining in the Cabinet with a man from whom he differed on the question of independence, Fox was defending his union with the man from whom he differed on every great question debated during those twelve years of strenuous opposition to the American war. During those years, Shelburne and Fox had fought in the same camp against North. The American question was only one of the differences between Fox and North. With his own denunciations of Shelburne's "King of Mahrattas" still sounding in the ears of the House of Commons, Fox listened patiently while his new ally deliberately repeated his condemnation of the Resolution of the 6th of April, 1780, and declared categorically that he thought the influence of the Crown "by no means too great"; called the American war "just," and blamed Fox and his friends for having opposed it. And, instead of disclaiming sympathy with these sentiments, Fox could presently after solemnly declare that he repented ever having tried to stop the war!

In 1783 it was treachery to Whig principles in Shelburne to mention the King's constitutional prerogative of war and peace. In 1788 Fox was the furious assertor of the prerogative of the Prince of Wales to assume the government of the country during the King's illness, without the sanction of Parliament. No heir to an estate, whose father is lunatic, is suffered to administer that estate without the express sanction of the Law; but Fox maintained that a Prince of Wales could dispense with such sanction, and act precisely as in the case of a demise of the Crown. And to make so glaring an inconsistency more glaring, it happened that this Prince of Wales was on the worst of terms with his afflicted father, and was the boon companion of Fox. His Regency would have meant the immediate return of Fox to power. What is there in Shelburne's career to compare with this? And yet one historical writer after another carefully spares Fox, and accepts his judgment of Shelburne.

Even Mr. Macknight—usually so just and impartial—while fully realising the fatal effects of the Coalition, says of Shelburne, "He is the only Prime Minister of England the truth of whose word, when publicly pledged, has been as publicly contradicted, and whom his opponents have directly accused of falsehood."[1]

[1] Mr. Macknight makes this remark in the course of his account of the debate on Barré's pension. His *Life of Burke* was written sixteen years before Lord Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, and he was apparently unaware of Rocking-

It was Fox and his friends who accused Shelburne of falsehood, and Fox and his friends had to justify their coalition with North, whom they had directly accused of falsehood a hundred times.

Fox has a reputation for honesty—the goodness of his heart was never called in question by his friends, and even his enemies speak of his weaknesses with less venom than might be expected, considering how hard he hit them. But a man may be unscrupulous, not from any innate insincerity, but from ungovernable desire. Fox threw scruples to the wind out of sheer temper and passion, and justified himself out of sheer obstinacy. He had staked all on one throw of the dice, and he cared not what he said if he could for the moment make a point for himself. North's departures from truth were unwilling wriggles and quibbles—the attempts to escape from a situation which he knew to be untenable, yet continued to defend. Fox seems, at the time of the Coalition, to triumph in eating his own words—he shrinks from nothing, he knows no qualms, the fury of his onslaught carries him away. He leaves an impression, less of want of principle, than of desperation and recklessness. He does not forget—he defies. North did not help him. Indeed it sometimes seems as though North were taking a subtle revenge, when with such inconvenient candour he avows that his own opinions remain unchanged. It was Fox who said that North had learned wisdom—North himself never made any such claim. The rôles seem reversed—it is now Fox who quibbles, and North who throws off all subterfuge, and declares himself openly. He seems determined to accentuate the differences between himself and his new friends. He must have been ironical, when on the 31st of March he said that "the honourable Mr. Fox and himself undoubtedly were agreed on many great points—*as they were known to the House, there was no occasion to repeat them.*" But there was only one great point on which they were agreed, and that was the removal of the Earl of Shelburne. On all the others—and they were vital questions—North was of the same opinion still as in the days when Fox attributed to him all the misfortunes of the nation.

Never was statesman condemned on such trumpery evidence. His enemies were reduced to declaring him *capable* of any crime. Men who have actually committed the crimes of which Shelburne's enemies could only declare him capable, are honoured names.

ham's Memorandum. It is, however, curious that Mr. Macknight did not see that Burke's own statement about Rockingham's feeling "bound" to do something for Barré rendered Burke's attack unjustifiable.

But Shelburne did none of those things which call forth the enthusiasm of a great people who have made a great mistake. He saved them, not by gaining brilliant victories by land and sea, but by ending a wicked and disastrous war. To prevail upon us not to renew it, he was obliged to tell us that we could not go on—that we should be ruined if we did. He told the King and the people that their resources were *not* inexhaustible; and neither kings nor peoples like to be told this.

He resigned sooner than his enemies expected—and this was treated as one more suspicious circumstance. Yet if he had clung to office, how eloquently would Fox and Burke have denounced him!

Shelburne's enemies forgot all verisimilitude in their accusations. This man who loved lies as though he had been their first inventor, selected to negotiate his peace "a simple, well-meaning man, on whom Franklin could make what impression he chose"—in order, apparently, to establish his power with George III and the English people, by committing them to a dishonourable peace. This obsequious Minister, who kept himself in power by flattering the King, was the only man who ever made George III do what he did not like, and a part of his flattery was to tell the King that his resources were not inexhaustible. The man so determined to be Minister that he was *capable* of any crime to maintain himself in power, and whom his worst detractors never called weak or cowardly, threw up the game so quickly that he surprised his adversaries. Wraxall—a hostile witness, a devoted friend of North—thought Shelburne might have made a stand, and imagined some dark and disgraceful reason for his not attempting it. Yet Wraxall as an honourable man felt compelled to own in after years that the only specified charge against Shelburne was entirely calumnious. Shelburne could, had he chosen, have coalesced with North. Had he been what his enemies said he was, he would have done so. He behaved exactly as though he were telling the simple truth, when he said that he came in to make peace—that he believed no one else would have had the resolution to make it—that he would do the same again. Having made peace, he saw that his own disappearance was the only way to disconcert the attacks on the peace which threatened to renew the war. He disappeared without an effort to save himself. He refused to bribe the few "mutes" whose votes would have turned the scale. He deliberately sacrificed his career to give us peace, and as soon as he had given it, he retired, lest the peace should be overthrown in order to overthrow himself with it.

One of his last acts was to recommend Dr. Shipley for the See of Canterbury. He also asked a peerage for Townshend—who became Lord Sydney. For himself he asked nothing, and received nothing. He only appeared once more in Parliament that session, when he attacked Cavendish for abandoning the Sinking Fund. He broke up no party. He erected no "fortress for disappointed ambitions."

CHAPTER CXXVI

THE COALITION

"An hon. member (Mr. Powis) had reflected on my ambition in the progress of my parliamentary conduct. But by what fact can he substantiate his charge? Has not my conduct been always consistent? Have I tried any road but one? . . . Have I endeavoured to gratify my ambition by the artifices of secret intrigue, by skulking behind the throne, by flattering his Majesty's prejudices? Have I ever deviated from the principles I have avowed? . . . The noble lord with whom I formed a coalition, differed from me on various grounds previous to the establishment of this connexion. We differed on the subject of the American war. This difference, however, was obviated when that war came to a period. I thought the influence of the crown too great. On this subject the noble lord also differed from me. This ground of contrariety of opinion was likewise, in some measure, taken away. A third thing in which the noble lord and myself entertained a variety of sentiment, was his connecting himself with an administration of whose measures he did not perfectly approve. This point the noble lord may still defend, whilst I retain my former opinions. These were the material grounds on which we differed, and which being done away, every objection to our coalition was removed."—*Fox on Lord Charles Spencer's Motion for the Removal of Ministers*, Jan. 16, 1784.

"Yet these are the men who accuse Lord Shelburne of duplicity, without having produced one instance during a six months' Ministry."—*Wyndham Temple to Lord Temple*, March 28, 1783.

"This young man's mind is not large enough to embrace so great an object, and his notions of the purity and steadiness of political principle absolutely incompatible with the morals, manners, and grounds of attachment of those by whose means alone the Government of the country can be carried on."—*Atkinson to Robinson*, March 25, 1783. (On Pitt's conduct.)

A MOST singular situation followed Shelburne's resignation—singular, not merely because a new Ministry was so long in forming, but because the parts seemed changed. North was no longer the docile instrument of the King's will. He not only steadily declined to form an Administration of his own—he was resolute in thwarting the King's efforts to prevent his coalition with Fox. The most likely supposition is that North, perceiving Fox must inevitably come in, acted solely in the interests of the Tory party, and disregarding for once the wishes of the King, joined with his late opponents, as the

only way of eventually defeating them—the only way, indeed, of keeping the Tory party together at all. The Tories were persuaded to see this. They had discovered by sad experience that perquisites were even less safe with Shelburne than with Burke. "Some had been affected in purse, others more in their future prospects, all in public estimation, by the recent reforms. Of these they knew Shelburne to have been the inspiring genius, whatever his Whig calumniators might say to the contrary."[1]

There was almost another Interministerium. The King abhorred Fox and his friends, talked of going to Hanover to escape them,—and had the yacht prepared. He seems to have thought seriously of leaving the Prince of Wales as Regent. He was even more determined not to have Fox as head of the Cabinet than he had been not to have Rockingham. To have the Duke of Portland would be the same as having Fox.[2]

No doubt the King's aversion to Fox was greatly accentuated by the fact that the graceless heir to the Crown had lately thrown himself into Fox's arms in the most undisguised way. Fox still lodged in St. James' Street; he rose very late, and had a levée of his followers, and the members of Brooks'—all his disciples. "His bristly black person, and shagged breast, quite open and rarely purified by any ablutions, was wrapped in a foul linen night-gown, and his bushy hair dishevelled. In these cynic weeds, and with Epicurean good humour, did he dictate his politics."[3] They talked very irreverently of the King—even betting on the length of his reign—this *perhaps* not before the Prince. But the King heard of it all, and no doubt thought it all happened in his presence.[4] Report went that the Prince had said, his father had not yet agreed to the Coalition, "but by God, he shall be made to agree with it!"

[1] "The 'recent' reforms are the reforms pushed on by Shelburne during the last summer and autumn, denounced by Burke in the debate on the Address of Thanks."—Fitzmaurice, *Life of Shelburne*, iii. 363.

[2] Portland was in such "great straits," that he could not keep up a house of his own, and the Duke of Devonshire lent him Burlington House. (Portland had married Devonshire's sister.) He had been nearly ruined in contesting Cumberland and Westmoreland with Lowther, and helping a worthless younger brother; the expenses of the Vice-Royalty of Ireland had done the rest. His character was unimpeachable, but he had no parliamentary abilities.—WALPOLE.

"That jolt-headed calf."—*Selwyn to Carlisle*, March 18, 1783.

[3] Walpole.

[4] The King asked Thurlow what he could do. Thurlow was reported to have replied that he could have no peace till Fox and the Prince were committed to the Tower.—WALPOLE.

The poor King believed that Fox had alienated his son's affections—but here he did Charles wrong. The Prince required no one to teach him to defy his father.

On the night of the 3rd of March, North was with the King for three hours. The King offered to consent to anything, if only Fox need not come in. North replied that no Administration could stand without Fox. Next evening, the King sent for North again, and urged him to break with Fox, and himself return to the Treasury. But North was firm.[1] His Majesty said, "Then good-night!" and the audience was over in ten minutes.

In all probability the King had hoped to drive Shelburne into a coalition with North. The later years of George III, and especially the character of his successor, threw his virtues into high relief, and have almost obliterated the memory of the earlier part of his long reign. But whatever may be the opinion as to Shelburne's "duplicity," there was not a single Whig Minister of George III who was not profoundly convinced of the King's dissimulation. Men as different as George Grenville, Rockingham, Chatham, Shelburne, all complain that they are betrayed by the King. Rockingham, Chatham, and Shelburne distinctly charge him with the Domitian-like trick of flattering and caressing the Minister he had resolved to get rid of on the first opportunity. He was now in a distressing dilemma. He had asked a boy of twenty-three to become his Minister, and the boy had refused. Meanwhile that boy was trying to carry on the government as best he could.

On the 5th of March the East India Company prayed for relief. Sir Henry Fletcher presented a Petition, setting forth that "the hostilities in India, which ended in the cession of territories," and the expenses occasioned by European wars, amounted to over 5 million sterling. The Company thought they ought to be indemnified for the European wars; and as for "the mere Indian wars," which produced the cession of territories and revenues, the petitioners conceived that if the Company acted as agents for the State, they ought to be reimbursed, and the State ought not to take the benefit of the acquisition, without first paying the expenses. But his Majesty's Ministers having soon after laid claim to the said

[1] North, however, seems to have been soon disappointed with the result of his coalition. Someone much connected with North, told Walpole that North at first thought Mr. Fox was to support him; now he finds that he is to support Mr. Fox.

territories, for the public (a claim which the petitioners resisted), a treaty took place thereon, "and under a mistaken idea of immense riches expected to flow into the petitioners' treasury in England from the revenues in India, an agreement was made by way of trial to suspend the determination of the claim" —the petitioners during this suspension paying £400,000 a year to the use of the public, and down to the 5th of July, 1772, £2,169,398, 18s. 2¼d. was so paid, whereby the Company incurred debts to a large amount, and were driven to such distress as to be obliged to apply to Parliament for relief, and a loan was made — afterwards repaid with interest. And though on an average of 15 years immediately preceding the acquisition of the Duennee, the Customs produced no more than £14,940,659, and in the 15 years immediately succeeding amounted to £19,889,673, the petitioners are now out of pocket ("in disburse"), on account of the wars and troubles in India, to the amount of £3,616,000, besides interest on that amount. And in 1781 Ministers resumed their claim to a participation in the profits of the revenues and territories, and demanded the immediate payment of £600,000 as three-fourths of the past profits, and the petitioners were at last induced to promise £400,000 in full of past profits up to the 1st of March, 1781, and from that time to pay the public three-fourths of all their profits in England beyond the dividend of 8 per cent., and to take on themselves the payment of sundry naval and military expenses, at all times before borne by Government. They have now had to postpone many of their commercial debts. These payments were made under a mistaken idea of the petitioners' pecuniary abilities, and they hope so much may now be returned as will enable them to carry on their affairs —especially the £300,000 so lately advanced when the petitioners were utterly unable to spare it — and to be released from the £100,000 which remains unpaid. They will want £900,000 to carry on their affairs to the 1st of March, 1784. During a European war, the increased charge of shipping alone is more than £500,000 a year. They explain that the payments exacted of them were supposed to be made out of the revenues in India — but it now clearly appears that if these payments are made in India, there will be nothing left for investments in England. The petitioners will get into debt every year by their trade—bills will be drawn to avoid sending home unloaded ships upon demurrage, "and will encourage smuggling." They want to be paid for the French prisoners,

the hospital expenses, and the expedition to Manilla. The whole is a curious sequel to Charles Townshend's pictures of inexhaustible wealth flowing for ever into the British treasury.

The same day Burke's "Bill for explaining his Bill of last year, for regulating the Pay-office," was read a second time. The opportunity for an attack on Shelburne was too good to be lost. The pensions to Ashburton and Barré were brought up again, and used by both sides, which gave occasion to Fox and Burke to say that those who supported the man to whose friends those two pensions were granted, had "thrown them in their teeth." Hence it was fair to conclude that there was nothing more dangerous than to do a kindness to some men, for their ingratitude would afterwards make this good-nature a ground of accusation. Then came something which touched Fox nearly. "The balances in the hands of public accountants were mentioned, and Mr. Fox seemed to be glanced at. This called him up; he said that it was very well known that he had never acted as an executor to his noble relation [Lord Holland], and therefore was, so far, as unconcerned in the matter of balances as any member in the House; his fortune would indeed be eventually interested in the settling of the accounts, as well as that of those who were dearest to him; still he meant to say, he was individually unconcerned in the balances," and did not care how public they were made. Next day Fox spoke of pensions granted as bribes for "taking an efficient office," and hinted at "a learned lord over the way," who accepted an office for life, at the very time that he accepted the office of Treasurer of the Navy—"almost a sinecure." Dundas retorted that he had not obtained the office of Keeper of the Signet in Scotland as an inducement to accept the treasurership of the Navy of England, "a place which he was very willing to confess was not fit for him," and he only held it till someone else was found.[1] "But he would not say he was unfit for his place in Scotland, *and he would assure the honourable gentleman he would never dishonour the patent, by carrying it to market.*" This pointed allusion called up Mr. Fox. "He said that his exchange of the clerkship of the Pells in Ireland for a pension on that kingdom had nothing in it dishonourable; the patent he had received from his father, as part of his fortune." In exchanging it, "to

[1] Perhaps Dundas did not want the Treasurership, but he did greatly wish for "a place for life." A year before he wrote to Robinson: "As to what you say about myself, you know I have long felt *seriously* hurt that I am the only person in Scotland whose office is not for life."—March 9, 1782.

accommodate government," he had given away a thing of greater value than that which he got in return for it. No one ever thought it disgraceful—"the place was no favour to him from the Crown, no boon from his present Majesty or his ministers, but a legacy left him by one of his relations, as disposable by him as any other species of property." Rigby assured the House that Mr. Fox's bargain was "perfectly honourable"—there was "but one thing censurable—the right hon. gentleman had parted with his patent for less than it was worth." Rigby also absolved the Lord Advocate—he had told Mr. Rigby months ago that he was ashamed the head of the Bar in Scotland should hold so lucrative an employment, so little connected with his profession as the treasurership of the Navy. The only reflection to be made on these frank admissions, is how Fox could reconcile his attack on Shelburne with his sense of justice. Shelburne's pensions were few, and all to persons who had rendered real services to their country—Carleton, Sir Joseph Yorke, Grantham, Dunning, and Barré, and the ostensible reason for the debate was to ascertain whether, since Burke's Bill was not to come into force till the 5th of April, pensions could legally be granted in the interim, and to abuse Shelburne if this was acted on. It is curious that the one pension which Fox seemed most to favour, was that to Thurlow, for whom he once more professed the strongest "private friendship," though "perhaps he was of opinion" that his great abilities "were exerted in a manner most injurious to the interests of the country."[1]

Shelburne had wished Pitt to remain, chiefly that he might push forward the Bill to regulate our Commercial intercourse with the United States. It was very near Shelburne's heart. It was framed in accord "with the liberal principles which had actuated Jay and Oswald in their conversations on the subject at Paris,"[2] and released America from the restrictions of the Navigation Act. It was coldly received by the Coalition. On March 7th Fox and Burke were strong on the neglect which had omitted the regulation of commerce from the Treaty—not knowing, or not caring to know, that Oswald had found it would be highly imprudent to press anything of the sort till the negotiations for peace were concluded, both Franklin and Jay being excessively sensitive about anything which seemed in the least degree derogatory to

[1] Pitt explained that a pension was promised Thurlow, by the King (apparently on his retirement); and the King had given it a few days ago. All Shelburne's enemies agreed that this was perfectly right.

[2] Fitzmaurice, iii. 370.

complete independence. The negotiations were sufficiently complicated already. Nor was Fox now in a very liberal mood—he thought America ought to be satisfied with the repeal of the Prohibitory Acts; he was against giving her any more privileges than she had before the war—we should only make other nations jealous—he "almost" thought the Bill an infraction of the treaty with Russia and Denmark—we must be very cautious how we proceed. Eden had already suggested this, and had said that the Bill would introduce "a total revolution in our commercial system"—Eden was afraid it would "shake it to its basis, and endanger the whole pile."[1] At the same time "something" was necessary to be done with "all possible despatch." One objection was that it completely repealed the Navigation Act—so we might bid adieu to any Navigation Act to bind Ireland in future. For Ireland was bound to obey the Navigation Act only as long as it was part of the law of England—Ireland would find herself freed from it for ever. He went through all our commerce, and showed that hardly any of it would be able to survive if we granted these privileges to America. Then are the American ships the ships of aliens? They are now a foreign State, and it is proposed to give them the privileges of British subjects. Are all the world to be admitted as British subjects? Much worse, however, is the emigration of manufacturers, the loss of our seamen—we shall have all the evils of a declining country. "It had been easy to foresee that American independence must tend to great convulsions in our commerce." The hour of calamity has now come. Captain Luttrell having called for some Minister to be responsible for the Bill, Pitt took the responsibility on himself—while saying that he did not consider himself permanently a Minister—he only held his office till a successor should be appointed. Burke, in a speech far more against Ministers than against the Bill, said he would support its principles, though he disliked the clauses. His speech is valuable for the facts it contains. Eden had said we should lose our manufactures by the emigration of our artificers, and the exportation of our working tools. It was one of the "puerilities" of our laws to forbid the exportation of manufacturing tools—we might as well try to prevent hay-making in America by prohibiting the exportation of scythes. Nor could we prevent the emigration of artificers—nor would it be very wise to try. "It was very well

[1] Eden proposed an alternative Bill which looks as though he had forgotten recent events altogether. His Bill was to (1) *Establish the independence of the colonies.* (2) *Repeal the Acts which prohibit intercourse.* (3) and (4) regarded duties on imports and exports.

known, that before the war, 8000 persons used to emigrate in a year from the north of Ireland to America, and yet there never was a linen manufacture set up there." The reason was obvious—these persons took to agriculture and the grazing of cattle. "The cheapness of land, and above all the idleness which necessarily attended upon the cheapness, and was the principal boon that America held out to emigrants, naturally prevented men from thinking of manufactures." We need not fear that they would rival us in manufacture while they have nearly 900,000 square miles to attract the inhabitants to agriculture. Fox hinted at another censure on Ministers for not having put a commercial treaty in the Peace—but it would be very hard to censure Pitt, who certainly was "in no shape to blame."

The Bill was delayed; and at last, after Fox came in, it was re-drawn; and so the real object was attained—the Earl of Shelburne got none of the credit for it.

The long delay in forming a Ministry was ascribed variously to the King and Thurlow—on whose dismissal the Coalition insisted. That great bully, and able politician, was the King's henchman, spy, and bravo, all in one, and George III wanted to keep him in office to watch and check Fox.

On the 9th of March the King had a very long conversation with Lord Ashburton, of which Ashburton left an account (Lansdowne MSS). The King said he had seen the whole Cabinet, but not one of them had anything to suggest by which the Coalition could be resisted. He had tried to influence North through his father Lord Guildford, and had seen North one evening. He "received him with studied hauteur," expressed surprise at his conduct, and asked him "whether he saw any real objection to the peace?" "To the French and Spanish certainly none, but to the American," replied North, apparently forgetting that in the debate on the Preliminaries he had said that the Treaty actually gave Spain the means of enfeebling our strength, and that in Africa we had ceded everything to France, had restored all her establishments in India, and placed her in a better situation in Newfoundland than ever before. In the debate on the Censure, he had called the article of Dunkirk a disgrace, and said that our interests had been sacrificed to a premature accommodation. Now, it was, "Certainly none." The King replied that Lord North must know American Independence was a thing he could ill bear, "but that he must like it when he knew no better

could be expected, after what had passed in the House of Commons —with which if anybody was to be reproached, it was his new associates." *Then he reminded North, how, while still in office, and before the House met, "he had told him (the King) they could not go on; that the war could not be supported without heavy taxes on the necessaries of life; and that people of all classes were so little inclined to submit to new burdens, or indeed government of any sort, that a peace was absolutely necessary."* North himself had recommended a change of Administration, so the King had not expected opposition from him—and he had an explicit assurance from him, after his resignation, of his friends' support of the measures of Administration—only excepting any attempt to change the Constitution. On this, North agreed that peace could not be avoided, but expressed his dissatisfaction with the boundary line; "Upon which," said the King, "I reminded him of a transaction between him, Lord Dunmore, Lord Hillsborough, and Lord Carlisle, with David Barclay, in which they were told the Americans would insist on that line; and I asked him whether he thought it possible after their subsequent successes, and what had passed in December, to prevail with them to recede from what they had so strenuously insisted on so long before?" Then North shifted his ground. "Could he think that I meant to abandon men who had suffered by their attachment to the Constitution?" The King asked, "Did he think it wise to continue a war for this purpose, now, at any rate?" North "answered by an estimate of the expenses necessary to continue the war."

This conversation sets the King in a remarkably sensible light, and it proves (if further proof were needed) that North was without excuse for reprobating a treaty which he knew to be unavoidable. The King went on to tell Ashburton that Thurlow had no suggestions, that Mansfield was "broken and helpless," "cried all day long over his situation," and was, in fact, "an old woman who could be of no use to me." George III very soon forgot gratitude for past services. It seemed that Thurlow had made one suggestion —Lord Gower, "whose detestation of the Coalition was likely to incline him to step forth." But Gower refused, and recommended Mr. Thomas Pitt. "I desired him to apply to Mr. Thomas Pitt, or Mr. Thomas anybody." But Thomas Pitt declined, and advised letting the "coalition people" come in, but not allowing them to dispose of honours of any sort, nor to expect support from the Court—they could not last a month. For this reason, and because he thought it "immoral," the King declined. He had a wild notion of going to the House of Lords, and making a speech,

"which without assistance or communication anywhere, I have composed." It was to say that, by the selfish views of some, and the want of public spirit in others, he found himself unable to make up an Administration in place of the one whose demerit was the making a necessary peace. Ashburton gathered that the King meant to convey to the Lords, that if an Administration was to be so formed, it must be settled with his son! Greatly alarmed, Ashburton represented "the hopelessness of the measure, as there were none very much inclined to support it in the House; said I preferred a Minister to a speech." The King repeatedly urged his wish to find some man in the House of Commons less unpopular than Townshend and the Lord Advocate; and Thomas Pitt's name came up again. Ashburton thought him "a wrong-headed man."[1]

At last the King said he would send for Gower again—and then perhaps try the Duke of Northumberland. It is certain that he seriously inclined to his old idea when he could not have his own way—to retire to Hanover, and leave Fox and the Prince to govern the kingdom between them.

The King yielded piecemeal. On the 12th he sent for North again, and told him he would take Portland, but would not give up Thurlow. From the 7th to the 23rd he held out, hoping to break up the Coalition. On the 18th Coke said that if a Ministry was not formed within two days, he would move for an Address to the Crown. The King saw it would be dangerous to hold out much longer. He still would not see Fox, but he sent for North and Portland, and once more offered to give up every point but Thurlow. But Portland and Fox intended to put the Great Seal into Commission, and were determined to get rid of Thurlow. A second time the Treasury (with the Exchequer) was offered to Pitt, "and during twenty-four hours, he might be said to have in some measure actually held both these offices."[2] But Pitt saw too clearly that he could not stand against the Coalition in the Commons; and on the 24th he retracted whatever promise he had made.

That day Coke moved for an Address.[3] The first thing he did was to call on Pitt, to say whether any Administration was formed,

[1] Ashburton was not far wrong—Thomas Pitt was afterwards the Lord Camelford, who was killed in a duel, and the extraordinary adventures of whose body after his death have chiefly made him remembered.

[2] Wraxall.

[3] "The gallery was full by half-past one, and there were by three o'clock at least 400 members present."—*Parliamentary History.*

or forming, likely to possess the confidence of the nation? Pitt—just come from the King—replied that he knew of none. Then Coke moved the Address in a temperate speech; and Surrey, in seconding him, said that if the House did not call for an Administration, the people would—in a manner painful to the Crown![1]

Then began the attack on the Coalition. Buller said it surprised him beyond all description—for a series of years he had heard the right hon. gentleman [Fox] reprobate the conduct of a noble lord in the severest terms—"he had scarcely ever agreed to a single act he had done"; and he was astonished to hear him now as warmly support as he had formerly abused him. Buller suggested that a quarrel between the leaders—a struggle over loaves and fishes—was the cause of the delay. It was not his Majesty, he was sure—his Majesty had sacrificed his own feelings, and given up his opinion, to comply with the wishes of his people.

Martin called the Coalition "scandalous and ridiculous." For seven years he had opposed Administration, hoping to root out these very men, and now a great part of those who then acted with him had coalesced with "the great supporter of the American war." He considered that noble lord the cause of our calamities; he could not forget what he had heard from the hon. gentleman about his conduct. Hill said a report prevailed that Mr. Pitt was appointed First Lord of the Treasury, and he wished it were true, though if Mr. Fox were "disunited from his new connection," he would still say, "et tu Marcellus eris."

Fox was very angry at his Majesty's name being brought into debate—the King's private feelings were known only to his own breast. His Majesty can never act wrong unless ill-advised—and it is plain to see who is advising him now. We have been five weeks without a Government—and nobody ostensibly responsible. Then he got upon animosities. If it was ever right to forego them, it was right now—the situation of the country required it. And then he made a direct offer to Pitt. "*I am ready to shake hands even with those opposite to me, as well as with the noble lord in the blue ribbon, and from out of the three parties to form such an administration as the country could look up to with hope and with confidence.*"

[1] Though the King had no constitutional right to delay in accepting the Coalition accepted by the House of Commons, such was the unpopularity of the alliance that the nation at large liked him all the better for his refusal. Whether a man had been for North or for Fox, he was equally disgusted at the Coalition. Both sides knew that there was never a Coalition like this.

He then praised those who were ready to undertake the government "in a moment of uncommon difficulty," with a loan directly to be made, and other questions of infinite magnitude, to "rescue the empire." He turned on Buller with a *tu quoque*—he understood (he was not old enough to remember) that fourteen years ago that hon. gentleman had left Opposition to join the noble lord. Was it worse to do that in a body now, than for an individual to do it fourteen years ago? And it could not be said that there had been no government for these five weeks—it had been the most bare-faced government ever known in this country—a government, not by Ministers or Secretaries, but by persons supposed to have only secret influence. They now stand forward advising his Majesty to act in opposition to the wishes of his people and Parliament. (Here Fox looked hard at Jenkinson.) If any man wished to see who had governed, let him go to the other House—there he would find "the great adviser." And as an Amendment had been proposed (though not put), explicitly praying his Majesty not to nominate or appoint any persons to the vacant departments who "by their mismanagement of affairs had lost the confidence of the people," Fox said that if this had been put, he would have moved an Amendment of the Amendment, still more explicitly praying his Majesty to be graciously pleased not to employ as Ministers any of those whom that House had declared to have made a peace, in which the concessions to our adversaries "were greater than they were entitled to."

Johnstone reminded Fox that Thurlow was once his friend—Johnstone had heard him pronounce Thurlow's eulogium, and say he was the single exception in the Administration of the noble lord in the blue ribbon, who ought to remain. Johnstone called Thurlow "a real pillar of the State," who would protect the country against "those mad projects of reform which threatened its annihilation." The noble lord's "firmness," and above all his incorruptible integrity, entitled him to be considered one of the great pillars of the State.

Fox explained that his personal "respect and friendship" for Thurlow were as high as ever—he only thought his public conduct calamitous to the country. His great abilities made him the more to be dreaded. Then Jenkinson rose to deny that he had advised his Majesty *secretly*. As a Privy Councillor, he was bound to advise the King if called on; "I confess that during the last five weeks I have been with him more than once"—but I never used secret influence. "That idea is only a popular trap for the multitude." The pretended secret influence never had any real

existence. He appealed to North to confirm this. As for danger to the country, we were three months without a Government in 1757, and engaged in a very expensive and bloody war, but the interregnum did not ruin the country.

Macdonald was very severe on the Coalition—comparing it, as Pitt had done, to an ill-assorted marriage. On every material question they differed on every essential point. The principles of the noble lord and those of his new allies were diametrically opposite—one or other must yield. And as the power of his new allies was to his as ten to one "upon the whole," and two to one in the Cabinet, it was not to be believed that *they* would surrender their principles. What could a man think who had supported the noble lord for years, under every mortifying abuse as one of a corrupt majority, at finding he had "knocked under" to those whose principles of government he thought ruinous to the nation? He would find that dislike to the principles of his new friends would be as strong a motive with his followers, as attachment to himself. The public out of doors reprobated this unnatural connection as much as he did. "For years together, there had not been a particle of similarity between the parties to the supposed marriage." *Did* the noble lord think the power of the Crown too great?

Fox rose to defend North. First, he demolished Macdonald by referring to a former incident. This very severe attack need not give his lordship any pain—probably, before the rising of the House, or to-morrow at farthest, the hon. gentleman would get up and make an apology. There was a precedent for this! Then he admitted he did mean Thurlow was the cause of the delay—he was influencing the Sovereign. The hon. gentleman disapproved because "old enemies had become new friends." Was reconciliation so improper? He went on praising reconciliation, till it is a wonder no one asked him why he was not reconciled with Shelburne. Old Sir Charles Turner, a rough Yorkshireman, made a pathetic appeal to "his friend Charles, who was his leader, and to whose back he thought himself tied, as one of his pecus, to be led wherever he drove." The noble lord in the blue ribbon was one of the chief supporters of the "cursed American war." He ought to have been impeached. But to commit political crimes was the surest road to titles, pensions, ribbons! The noble lord ought to have been sent up into the other House—where he could talk with Sandwich! My friend Charles has done wrong to make this Coalition—no doubt it was well-intended, but it will not answer the end.

And now North rose to deny that he had ever given up his principles—nor had those he had joined given up theirs. "*He maintained the same opinions still respecting the prerogative of the Crown, and by no means thought it too great.*" The "strange vote," that the influence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished, was, he trusted, seen to be erroneous by almost every person—*he was against it when made, and was so still.* He had consented to the Coalition to put an end to discord. It would be cruel to expel him that House because the event of the war proved unfortunate. He entered upon it with a good intent. "*The situation of the country at the commencement of that war was such as to justify the measure.*"

It was a categorical denial of Fox's assertion that he had learned wisdom by sad experience. North used language which it was impossible to mistake. As for differences—he said it was almost impossible for any persons in that House to agree together who had not formerly materially differed. There were three parties—at least—*and he had no objection to a Coalition of all three.* As for the secret influence "lurking behind the throne, *which frustrated his intentions*, he would freely confess he never found any." Nor could he say he knew of the Lord Chancellor giving secret advice—"I always found him an upright, honest man." Nor was the delay caused by a quarrel for power, "or for loaves and fishes"—indeed North had heard more about loaves and fishes that day in the House than during the whole negotiation!

Pitt, thus publicly invited by both leaders of the Coalition to join them, declined as publicly, in a speech which made a profound impression on Wraxall. There are persons who can easily reconcile their minds to the sacrifice of old principles, and adopt new rules of conduct. I am as yet too young to relinquish my opinions, and conform my ideas to the triumphs of Party. Gentlemen opposite talk of extinguishing animosities, and modifying their opinions, as they would change their gloves. What they reprobate to-day they are justified in applauding to-morrow—the persons they hate and hoot at in the morning, in the evening they esteem it patriotic to take to their bosoms. Such maxims are repugnant to my nature. I cannot coalesce with men whose sentiments are diametrically opposed to my own—if they come over to my way of thinking, I cannot trust them; and if I adopt theirs, I shall act against my honest judgment. He therefore declared "explicitly" that his principles would not conform themselves to the present times, or adopt the mode of reasoning by which the present Coalition is justified. And then he asked how the noble lord could say

that he and Fox were perfectly agreed, when he had publicly avowed that he meant to oppose the Reform Bill?[1]

Coke's motion was carried with about four dissentient voices.

The King made a vague reply to the Address, and on the 27th Surrey gave notice that if the vacant offices were not filled up within four days, he would move for an Enquiry into the cause of the delay. On the 26th Pitt had once more refused the Treasury. Sheridan had little cause to reproach Pitt with his youth. It is no wonder that Pitt's character impressed those around him as much as his abilities. It is true that in this case honesty was the best policy, but it takes an honest mind to see this—the dishonest man always thinks that dishonesty stands at least as good a chance as honesty.

So it went on to the 30th, the King constantly sending for somebody — Gower, North, Ashburton; lamenting that Temple was in Ireland—before he could be summoned the situation might change. But Temple would have declined like the rest—as he did decline to serve under the Coalition. Once more the King tried to persuade Pitt; while the majority in the Commons grew furious, and Shelburne told him there must be a Government. Over and over again Wyndham Grenville had written to his brother, that

[1] "Never, not even on the 21st of the preceding Month, when on the Point of laying down his official situation, did he [Pitt] appear to me more an Object of just Admiration! Lord North and Fox . . . had both, successively, in the Course of addressing the House on that Evening, offered to receive him into their Coalition. It rested with *Him* to have composed one of the new *Triumvirate*, in which he assuredly would not have occupied the meanest Place. He might have continued at the Head of the Exchequer . . . the Odium of the Coalition could not have attached to *Him*, who had not contributed in the remotest Degree to its Formation. Power and Office, and the Emoluments of Place, lay open to him, and seemed to solicit his Acceptance; while, on the other Side, he beheld the thorny Path of the Law. . . . From his official and splendid Residence in Downing Street, he must remove to Chambers in one of the Inns of Court. His Fortune was narrow, his Ambition immeasurable. . . . Perhaps he foresaw that an Alliance . . . equally odious to the Sovereign and to the Majority of the Nation . . . could prove of no Duration. Probably he even anticipated, at no remote Distance of Time, his own future ministerial Triumph over the two new Allies. Yet, even admitting these Facts, his Line of Conduct does not excite less Astonishment, nor detract from his pre-eminent Merit. In his Reply to the Offers of the Two Coalition Chiefs, he seemed to be impelled and animated by Feelings of a higher Description than mere Power could satisfy. . . . I was a witness of the involuntary Applause extorted by this lofty and disinterested Declaration, which at once extinguished every Hope of Pitt's uniting with the *Coalition*."—Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs*, iii. 362, 363, 364.

"all was settled," and again, that "all was off."[1] But at last, on the 1st of April, the King himself wrote to Lord Temple: "I intend this night to acquaint that *grateful* Lord North that the seven Cabinet Councillors the Coalition has named shall kiss hands to-morrow." But he had made up his mind to refuse any honours they might ask for. He even complained that the Duke of Portland had treated him with personal incivility. The King called the Coalition "an unnatural combination," and hoped it would only last a few months. He was compelled to submit. That had happened which never happened when Fox was fighting North for the existence of the country — Supplies had not been voted!

The ill-starred Coalition Ministry came in on the 2nd of April, 1783, with the Duke of Portland at the Treasury, Cavendish Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Earl of Carlisle Lord Privy Seal, Stormont President of Council, Keppel again at the Admiralty, and Lord North and Mr. Fox principal Secretaries of State. The Great Seal was put into Commission (Loughborough and three others). Burke was once more Paymaster; Sheridan and Richard Burke were Secretaries to the Treasury. On Temple's resignation Lord Northington was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Townshend, who was present at "the kissing in," said that he was sure the Coalition would not last—he observed that when Fox kissed hands, "George III turned back his ears and eyes just like

[1] On the 28th of March, the King talked long with Wyndham Grenville, who wrote an account of the conversation to Lord Temple. After observing upon "the inconceivable quickness with which the King ran on upon the different subjects," he says that his Majesty "went into a long detail (with a great number of digressions) of what had passed, particularly between him and Lord North, of whom he spoke in terms of strong resentment and disgust." He was very angry with North for declining to take the Treasury, but "much as he disliked them both, he must certainly prefer Lord North to Fox." There were "a great variety of digressions,"—upon Fox, "whom he loaded with every expression of abhorrence; upon the Duke of Portland, against whom he was little less violent; upon Lord North, to whose conduct he imputed all the disasters of the war; upon American Independence, which seems to have been a most bitter pill indeed."

"He [the King] went over with me a great variety of subjects . . . and very particularly the characters of Lord North and Fox. . . . The first, he said, was a man composed entirely of negative qualities, and actuated, in every instance, by a desire of present ease at the risk of any future difficulty. This he instanced in the American war, and in the riots of 1780, of which he gave me a very long detail. As to Fox, he allowed that he was a man of parts, quickness, and great eloquence; but that he wanted application . . . and above all, was totally destitute of discretion and judgment."—*W. Wyndham Grenville to Lord Temple*, March 28, 1783.

the horse at Astley's, when the tailor he had determined to throw was getting on him."[1]

The Coalition lasted exactly nine months. It never possessed the confidence of the nation, and it never deserved to possess it. Upon the point on which it overthrew Lord Shelburne, it was compelled, after six months' efforts, to accept what he had done. It exhibited the astonishing spectacle of a Ministry kept alive by its political opponents. When at last the King dismissed it, no voice was found outside it to complain of royal interference. Its record is nil. Of its monstrous India Bill, the less said the better, and Pitt's very moderate Reform Bill was lost by very nearly two to one.

Notwithstanding their assurances that they meant to observe the Preliminaries, the Coalition reopened the American negotiations—they did not venture to meddle with the French—and new propositions were made and agreed to on each side. After five months, however, they resolved to abandon these, and offer to sign again, as a definitive Treaty, the Articles of November 30, 1782.[2] The final Treaties were signed in Paris on the 3rd of September, 1783, by England, France, Spain, and America. The Dutch Treaty had been signed the day before. Thus the Coalition had to confess that better terms than Shelburne's could not be obtained. In the end the Coalition Ministry had to accept Shelburne's terms.

New York was not evacuated by the British till the 25th of the following November. On that day Washington moved his

[1] He had been able to disappoint them of one great piece of preferment. "At this Moment, Dr. Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury, died, and the King, afraid that Fox would make Shipley of St. Asaph, or Hinchcliffe of Peterborough, his successor, immediately sent for Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Gloucester, and offered the See to him. Hurd declined, on the score that his present functions were as much as he felt capable of performing. The King failing to persuade him, at last asked him to name some one, as there was not an hour to lose before the new Ministry might come in. Dr. Hurd named Dr. Louth, Bishop of London, and a Messenger was instantly despatched to London House. Louth also declined the Honour! The King then insisted on the two Bishops naming some one else, and after a few Minutes' deliberation, without quitting the Royal Presence, they named Dr. John Moore, Bishop of Bangor. Dr. Moore was sent for, and to his great astonishment was offered the See of Canterbury. He accepted, but the many formalities took so long that the translation was only completed the very day the Coalition took possession."—WRAXALL, *Memoirs*, iii. 347, 348..

Dr. Cornwallis died on the evening of March 19. He was uncle to Lord Cornwallis.

[2] Franklin to the President of Congress, August 31, 1783.

army from Harlem to the Bowery (at the upper part of the city), where they remained while Sir Guy Carleton embarked the British troops from the lower parts. Then came the formal entry, Washington with his suite leading the procession. The British had made a brilliant display with their scarlet coats—the Continental army was still ill-clad, weather-beaten, "and made a forlorn appearance," said an eye-witness. But by this time their countrymen admired them all the more because they were weather-beaten and forlorn.

On the 4th of December, Washington took leave of his officers in the room at Fraunces' Tavern, near the ferry. One by one, without a word, but not without tears, they took his hand, "and gave him a brother's embrace"; and still in silence they followed him as he went down to the barge that was to take him across to the Jersey shore.

At noon on the 23rd he delivered up to the President of Congress his commission as Generalissimo of the armies of the United States. Congress received him, sitting and covered, as became the representatives of Sovereign States. Then he rode away to Mount Vernon, to keep his Christmas as a private citizen, but to be hereafter First in Peace as he had been First in War.[1]

Aranti quatuor sua jugera in Vaticano. . . : Cincinnato viator attulit dictaturam.

At the close of the Seven Years' War, the National Debt was £139,000,000. At the close of the American War—undertaken to help pay off that debt—it was £268,000,000. Our scheme for making the Colonies share the burden of Empire had cost us £129,000,000. We had never even expected to get as much as a quarter of a million revenue out of America. We had suffered innumerable disasters, had lost half a continent, and very nearly lost Gibraltar. America had suffered too; but her thirteen provinces, from being mere "Colonies and Plantations," hangers-on to the commerce of a great nation in

[1] "I feel now as I conceive a weary traveller must do, who, after treading many a weary step with a heavy burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing with an eager eye the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way, and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Disposer of human events could have prevented his falling."—*Washington to Knox.*

another hemisphere, and permitted to buy and sell only as she chose to permit, had become Thirteen Sovereign States, treating on equal terms with the Powers of the world. This was the great achievement of the North Ministry. It made the American people.

THE END

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